

PERSONAL

Since we have all of us been dragged up somehow, mostly within a family, and we have all been to school, it is to be expected that everyone feels qualified to express opinions about both schools and families, how they are and how they ought to be. If anything (and this is a hard judgment to make) I believe more nonsense is talked about the family than about the school.

And the reason is paradoxical. Although so many people have experience of the family in one form or another, they are more easily seduced by half-baked theory in this field than in any other. Indeed, it isn't even theory that seduces and misleads them; it is simple cliché. Everyone knows what the family is supposed to be... mother and father and at least one child, living in heavenly harmony, with the Christmas tree in the corner and the cat before the fire. And very nice too. But, we may ask, what are the features essential to such an ideal picture?

The answer most often given, I suppose, would be that there must be a pair of grown-ups of opposite sexes. Without this, the ideal family couldn't even begin to exist. Therefore the notion of the one-parent family is introduced as the signal for disaster. It seems, as a matter of simple logic, to be the furthest possible from the ideal.

Now I in no way want to deny that many one-parent families are in extremely bad shape. For a woman, whether married or not, living alone with a small child, battling with problems of housing, of child-care, of being able to earn, life must indeed be almost unbearable. The child of such a woman may well suffer. But it is arguable that what he will suffer from most is poverty and material deprivation. If single parents could imaginably overcome their financial problems, the child might, or might not, suffer: it would entirely depend on the amount of love, freedom, understanding, encouragement and hope with which he was surrounded. And these things are needed by all children equally, however many parents they have.

It would therefore be much better, in my view, if, when discussing "problem" children, teachers and social workers would talk about those children who were manifestly living below the poverty line, rather than about one-parent children, as if these children would necessarily be problematic. It would then be much clearer what sort of deprivation the problem children were suffering from.

But, it may be argued, this is to disregard everything we know about the importance to a child of having two parents, a male "model" and a female "model". My response is to ask how



Mary Warnock

much we really do know. What is the evidence? I can accept, of course, that a child brought up without a mother, will be more ignorant of women than a child with mother and father. But this is not to say that he cannot catch up later, or that his attitude, either to men or women, will be permanently affected. The widespread belief that it will be, and that he will be permanently damaged, is based on certain assumptions, certain unproved theories, vaguely descended from

Freud, and probably passed on in a somewhat random way, in the training of social workers and teachers.

At long last it is permissible to question the truth and even the utility of Freud's general system of mythology. At least we no longer have to accept it as given, with or without supporting evidence. It may therefore also be permitted to question the assumption that the child of the one-parent family is for that reason alone worse off than his contemporaries who conform to the standard pattern. Guessing, I would say that a far more important factor in the happiness and security of a child was whether his missing parent, father or mother, was spoken of with affection and respect or with disgust and horror, or not spoken of at all. An equally, perhaps even more, important factor might well be whether the child had brothers and sisters.

It is likely that in the future we shall have to be prepared to consider these and other questions about what constitutes a family, and what makes a family a good or a bad environment for a child. We cannot be content with the simplification, which in any case many people know from experience to be wrong, that two parents are good, one parent is bad. How are we to rate a parent and a step-parent? How a mother and husband, with a child born

hy artificial insemination, father unknown? How will a child brought up by two women living together, or two men, rate in the happy family stakes?

With more alternative ways of starting a family available, and more permitted discussion of the alternatives, it will be necessary for us to change some of our entrenched attitudes. For otherwise it will be the children of these new-style families who will suffer. Either they will be deceived about their origins in order that the myth of the ideal family may be preserved; or they will know that their own family falls short of what is expected, and they will feel themselves a prey to the social workers and teachers, who will regard them as At Risk.

It wouldn't be bad to try eliminating the concept of the family altogether for a bit, first from political, then from sociological and educational discourse, as well as from the discourse of advertising. It might be a good way to get us to think of children as individuals, not as products of their heredity and environment, to be understood only in these terms. But if that is too difficult to contemplate (and obviously the present Government, among other interest groups, would find it very upsetting to have to deny themselves the concept) then at least let us ban the expression "one-parent family", and see how we get on.

TES CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Here, in case you missed them first time round, are the really important events, controversies, personalities and snippets of gossip as recorded by *The TES* month by month over the past year. Impress your friends, colleagues and superiors with your powers of recall and intuitive guesswork. The answers are on page 13.

JANUARY

- 1 Which year was described as "not a good year for education"?
- 2 Which country did *The TES* say was the first to have provided every secondary school with a computer?
- 3 It was announced that the only...

- 4 Closing. Where?
- 5 Why did *The TES* have to apologise to children's author Jan Needle?
- 6 Which school applied to the Charity Commissioners for permission to exclude local education authority members from its governing body?



6 Julian Glover, as he appeared in *The TES* on January 11 and on television. Which part was he playing?

FEBRUARY

- 7 Which country declared 1983 to be "The Year of the Pupil"?
- 8 Which strike caused 4,000 children to work at home?
- 9 Why did teachers' pay talks get off to an electric start?
- 10 Which school's head claimed it was "the most overcrowded and ill-equipped secondary school in the country"?
- 11 Which girls' school launched a £1.3m appeal for an engineering centre?



12 What were these young protesters worked up about?

MARCH

- 13 By what percentage did average pocket money rise in 1982?

- 14 In which country did a 14-year-old blow up his teacher's car after a bad report?
- 15 Which organization was granted a place on ACSET?
- 16 Which county voted to give women three years maternity leave?
- 17 Which ship announced that it would be taking up other work in early 1984?



18 Which organization were these two promoting?

APRIL

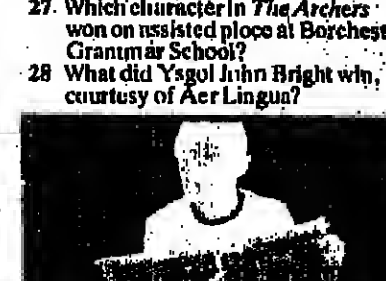
- 19 Where did Susan Ryan become education minister?
- 20 On which university campus did Wang Laboratories announce plans to set up a £40m manufacturing plant?
- 21 What was said to have been at large in a Glasgow school for four years?
- 22 Who was chosen for Warrington South after failure at Tatton?
- 23 Which I.e.a. alleged department successfully prosecuted a mother for teacher assault?



24 What was this headmaster up to?

MAY

- 25 Which champion admitted having been thrown out of Enfield Grammar School "in their best interests"?
- 26 Which committee was said to be contemplating major changes (and produced Mode E and Mode N in the year)?
- 27 Which character in *The Archers* won an assisted place at Barchester Grammar School?
- 28 What did Ysgol John Bright win, courtesy of Aer Lingus?



29 Can you remember who he was?

JUNE

- 30 Which London borough became...

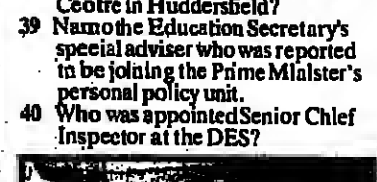
- 31 What was stolen from a store in Chertsey Street?
- 32 Why were Dallas and Kenny Everett, in hot water at the DES?
- 33 Which problem was highlighted by Jan Harding's report?
- 34 Who became president of the Schools' Music Association?



35 Who were these two, featured in a political article on June 17?

JULY

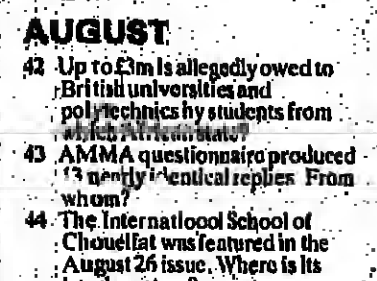
- 36 Which college threatened to take Sir Keith Joseph to the High Court over its closure?
- 37 Whose speech had to be read by actor Leon Tannor because of a busby throat?
- 38 Who died on a fun run to raise money for the National Children's Centre in Huddersfield?
- 39 Name the Education Secretary's special adviser who was reported to be joining the Prime Minister's personal policy unit.
- 40 Who was appointed Senior Chief Inspector at the DES?



41 Where is this school, now threatened with closure a second time?

AUGUST

- 42 Up to £1m is allegedly owed to British universities and polytechnics by students from the University of...
- 43 A KAMA questionnaire produced 13 nearly identical replies. From whom?
- 44 The International School of Choueifat was featured in the August 26 issue. Where is its headquarters?
- 45 Who claimed that his school had the best sport, recreational and social facilities in the country?
- 46 Name the famous art and architecture historian who died this month.



47 Name Central Television's new TV quiz show for sixth-formers.

SEPTEMBER

- 48 Which university came top of this year's graduate employment league table?
- 49 What did Mary Warnock say was the worst clothing mistake that middle-aged women could make?
- 50 Which BBC programme celebrated its 5,000th edition, amid charges that it was too middle-class?
- 51 "The Bishop" was tipped to head the Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts. What is his real name?

SEPTEMBER

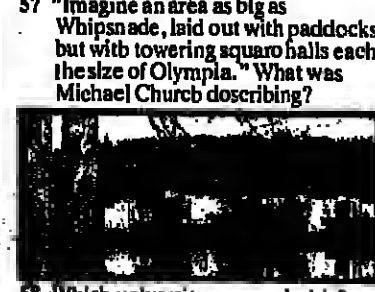
- 52 Of which campaign was this the symbol?
- 53 Who was said to be one of the few teachers to win the Queen's Award for Industry?
- 54 How many secondary school closures did the Education Secretary approve in 1982?
- 55 Which organization of "true Christian manliness" celebrated its centenary with a service in St Paul's and a long *TES* article?
- 56 Which Weymouth Grammar School parents raise £1,000?
- 57 Imagine an area as big as Wiltshire, laid out with paddocks but with towering square halls each the size of Olympia. What was Michael Church describing?



58 Which university campus is this?

OCTOBER

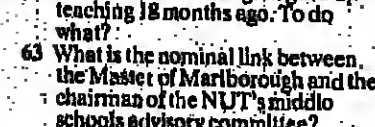
- 59 What became Labban's new education spokesman?
- 60 What did the NUT say heads should avoid banning at lunchtime?
- 61 Why will Mrs Anne Longley soon be moving from California to Brighton?
- 62 Quaker Susan Millington gave up teaching 18 months ago. To do what?
- 63 What is the nominal link between the Master of Marlborough and the chairman of the NUT's middle schools advisory committee?



64 Tyrrell Burgess wrote a spirited defence of the return of this. Whose motif is it?

DECEMBER

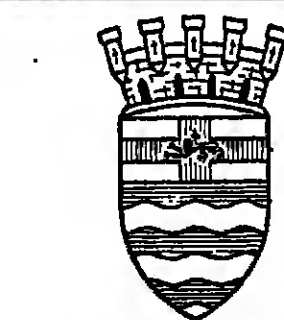
- 65 Biddy Passmore profiled the new ILEA chief inspector. What is his name?
- 66 Which I.e.a. became the first to declare its intention to seek to the Government's 3 per cent guideline for teachers' pay?
- 67 Which borough announced the use of maths and English tests to weed out unsatisfactory teachers and heads?
- 68 Who wrote: "Pringle sweaters, French yoghurt, cashmere scarves, CND badges, Vimto, Diet Pepsi... all tell rich and varied tales..."?
- 69 What did the HMI say Chell High School, Stoke-on-Trent, had too much of?



70 I just want to be ordinary. We've taken the money away from the people who write about ancient Egyptian scripts and the pre-nuptial habits of the natives of the Upper Volta valley.

NOVEMBER

- 71 I left school with many A levels. Gull said Damnation.
- 72 I asked to come here, and I'm delighted to be back.
- 73 If the law forbids a youngster from earning more than £20 a week, then the law is an ass.
- 74 Berkshire is rather more forward-looking than Kent.
- 75 I don't particularly like speaking. I'd be happy never to make another speech, but it goes with the job.
- 76 It could still erumble. Anything could happen - and probably will.
- 77 Who was the Zippy doodah. Hot diggity. Yoicks. Yippe. Fantastic. Brill. Ace. Magic. Triff. Super. Yowee. Hallelujah.

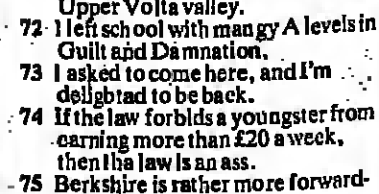


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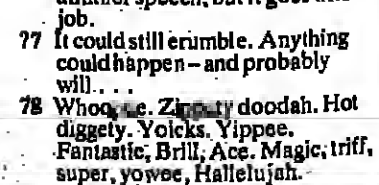
SOME QUOTES OF THE YEAR: WHO SAID (ALLEGEDLY)...

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London worst hit as intruders are blamed for extortion and violence

Rising crime forces FE colleges into stiff security

by Diane Spencer

Tougher security measures are being brought in at further education colleges to combat a steep rise in theft and violence.

Over the past year they have been the scenes of extortion, assaults and muggings plus rumoured drug pushing and protection rackets, with London colleges particularly badly hit.

Both the college authorities and the students union were particularly alarmed by the increase in violence against students and outsiders.

A one incident in a principal was threatened with a knife and hit with a bottle. Several students have also been stabbed and a woman lecturer attacked in a lavatory and her handbag stolen.

Most of London's colleges now have security staff on the doors and students carry identity cards.

Now Hammersmith and West London College is to install electronic metal detectors next term which will allow through registered students only.

Mr Bernard Smith, general secretary of the Association of Principals of Colleges, said this week: "Colleges are seen as rich pickings by a small minority for petty theft and extortion."

The lecturers' union, NATFHE, is also worried and Mr David Trieman, its inner London representative, said: "In the past 12 months there has been an unacceptably high number of either

serious or potentially serious incidents".

The colleges face trouble of two kinds - discipline from students and petty crime caused by intruders.

With the increase in youth unemployment, colleges are warm and inviting places to go. In Sheffield's Granville Road College, the principal, Mr Arthur Colledge, said the machine in the students' union were particularly attractive for unemployed youths.

Hammersmith and West London College is the biggest single site college in London with around 11,000 students amalgamated from 12 sites three years ago. Mr Roger Carus, the principal, is confident that the new security measures will keep out intruders and that the problems of theft and violence will disappear. "Once students are inside, it is a teacher's problem. Discipline is a matter for them."

But the college staff are not so sure. Ms Sue Fennie, a NATFHE representative at the college, called for more money to be spent on the college equivalents of youth workers and on student counsellors.

The ILEA spends £500,000 a year on security and is about to review this. It is one of the fastest growing parts of the budget, said Mr Ron Aldridge, inspector for further education. He added that the increase in violence and the need for security of premises was just "a part of the general scene in London".

Crocodiles menace school

Crocodiles have killed 25 pupils in the past five years at one primary school in western Zambia, according to an official report.

Children at the school, in Senanga district, 340 miles west of Lusaka, have been drinking from the nearby crocodile-infested Katongola River. Crocodiles are common to most of Zambia's rivers and lakes but there is no dependable estimate of how many lives they claim.

Last year they were reported to be taking on average of 30 people a month from the shores of Lake Mweru in northern Luapula province.

In another region, angry villagers beat up their chief and damaged his house after accusing him of not doing enough to combat the menace.

The figure on the Senanga school was given in a report by the official Zambia Information Services on the installation of a water pump for the pupils' use.

One in four of the reception teachers interviewed said that they flatly disapproved of any attempt by parents to teach academic skills to children under the age of five. Nearly six in 10 were prepared to sanction such intervention with reservations. Only one in 16 gave unqualified approval to parental teaching of pre-school children.

Overall, teachers were firmly opposed to parents teaching their children arithmetic. They believed parents would foul up the conceptual



Illustrator Quentin Blake demonstrates his skills to children at an exhibition of his work at the National Theatre in London

Fager parents in 3Rs clash

by Nick Wood

Teachers and parents clash over the best way to prepare children for school, according to a new infant school survey.

Most parents believe it is important to teach their children specific academic skills such as how to read, write and do sums. But teachers think they are better advised to restrict their help to building up language skills by reading and telling them stories.

Almost without exception, teachers want parents to avoid teaching their children the rudiments of arithmetic.

These are the results from a survey of attitudes and practice among over 200 parents and 31 teachers of 277 children attending 33 infant schools in London. They were reported to the annual London conference of the British Psychological Society last week by Mrs Clare Farragher of the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the London University Institute of Education.

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Overall, teachers were firmly opposed to parents teaching their children arithmetic. They believed parents would foul up the conceptual

approach, adopted in the first year of schooling, by making their offspring do page after page of old-fashioned sums.

They also disapproved of parents teaching their children to write, principally because they thought they would make a mess of it by instructing them to use capital letters instead of lower case.

Parents, however, take a different view. Seven in 10 say they have prepared their children for school by teaching reading, writing and arithmetic.

They say they will go on providing this help once their children are at school, because they see it as both enjoyable and their duty. Black parents lay particular stress on the importance of extra tuition for their children.

Both groups were also asked what factors determine a child's academic success. Predictably, parents believed the school was the most important influence, while teachers pointed to the family.

Among parents, there were some subtle but striking differences in attitudes. Whites said that social class, education and occupation exercised a powerful influence over how well a child did at school, whereas blacks were inclined to lay greater stress on the involvement, interest and efforts of parents.

Changing channels

by Carolyn O'Grady

Schools' programmes are to be transferred by Independent Television to Channel 4 in the autumn of 1985. The move has involved a capitulation by commercial interests within ITV, with the Independent Broadcasting Authority insisting almost two years should be allowed for its preparation.

But two problems must be overcome before then. First, the IBA estimates that about 200 schools - mainly rural primaries - will not receive Channel 4 by that date. Secondly, the regional element in the ITV schools service must be protected; one-third of the output is regional.

An IBA spokesman said last week that the authority is considering setting up a video-cassette distribution service for those schools unable to receive Channel 4; and it will soon begin negotiations about transmitting regional programmes on Channel 4. Local advertisements are already carried by Channel 4, so this problem is not insurmountable. As an alternative plan, the time on Channel 4 could be extended to broadcast regional programmes nationally.

What will happen after 1990 can only be the subject of speculation, because at that time everything goes into the melting pot as Channel 4's contractual arrangements with ITV come to an end. Videocassette distribution and night-time broadcasting have been discussed, but the emergence of cable television, satellite broadcasting and new technologies may throw up other possibilities.

THIS WEEK

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Flat spin

After Tom and Dick - in the asking the latest craze among school children?

In the running

Richard Garner looks at the candidates for the National Union of Teachers' executive.

Looking back

Biddy Passmore recalls issues and stories of 1983.



Platform

"Down with the system" is Gerald Hough's New Year message.

Core Français

One Hertfordshire comprehensive is determined to teach French in mixed ability classes to all 11 to 16-year-olds as part of a common curriculum.

Arts/Books

Television: Peter Mullen on the hidden effects of the BBC's new style of presentation; Robin Buss previews Channel 4's *A Childhood*; Betko Zamoyka discusses the BBC's quartet of programmes on Orwell. Heather Neill on Christmas shows; Roy Shaw on Philip Larkin; Hermann Peschmann and Katya Water on Shakespeare studies. Science textbooks.

18-25

Resources/Media

Christmas Charity Appeal Week: photographs by pupils at Newquay revivals of events including the egg push, a sponsored dip in the sea and a fancy dress parade; David Self reviews *The Rainbow Colour*; Disco Dancer and Hugh Davis surveys some video releases for young children.

26-27



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Where do we go from here?

Poised on the threshold of a new year – and 1984 to boot – it is time again to take a Janus look. Nineteen eighty-three has been an eventful year on the education front. A general election came and went and Mrs Thatcher's Government, the most ideologically committed right-wing government since the war, was confirmed in office for another four or five years.

While education was not a prime issue in the election, it occupies an important place in the scheme of social engineering which Mrs Thatcher's kind of conservatism is engaged in. This doesn't of itself guarantee education any money but it does mean that educational strategies are expected to harmonize with the Government's larger aims of encouraging and motivating the aspirations of the thriving, upwardly-mobile, self-pronounced sections of the community.

Education looks the key to many of the ambitions of this political constituency, and by extension, to any approach to national recovery rooted in its philosophy. All Sir Keith Joseph's decisions about education policy have to be read in relation to this larger scenario and all the controversial things it implies for the progressive diminution of the Welfare State.

Paradoxically, however, it was not until Sir Keith Joseph was persuaded to drop vouchers – privatization par excellence – and put student loans on the back burner, that he began to come to terms with the Department of Education and Science. This happened in the months immediately before the general election, and was sealed in its immediate aftermath by Mrs Thatcher's uncompromising dismissal of vouchers as impractical.

Sir Keith, who a year ago seemed like a detached observer bored by the detail of an education system which he hoped to dismantle, has now begun to enjoy the job of Secretary of State and Schools Minister.

Under his management and training, on the reform of the 16-plus examinations, on certain kinds of in-service training and on the follow up of Circular 6/61 on the curriculum, is evidence of renewed enthusiasm.

So is the Bill now going through Parliament which will give the DES its own small development fund, adding another modest lever to the Secretary of State's hand. Getting Ministers to see the merit of this was Sir James Hamilton's parting achievement before he retired as permanent secretary in April – one which his successor will have occasion to thank him for.

Rates: bleak outlook

In many respects, 1983 was a better year for education than there was any reason to expect a year ago. Cynical observers may argue that this is always likely: that the onset of a general election always leads to a modest loosening of the reins (and, therefore, some modest improvement) which is brought to an end within months of a new Chancellor establishing his grip. Be that as it may, the combined effect of a little "overspending" by most local authorities, and a lower than budgeted inflation rate, has meant that there has been a bit more money about at the margin in 1983 than had been expected and education has been one of the beneficiaries.

Looking ahead to 1984 there is no reason why this



1984: what prospects for rates, YTS and exams?

state of affairs should continue in the light of intensified penalties and the odious rate-capping Bill which has now begun its parliamentary Odyssey. If there is still more belt-tightening to look forward to, it will take some time to get abated and verse. The next HMI survey of local spending and educational provision will reflect the relatively buoyant 1983 scene, not the colder reality of 1984.

What next for YTS?

Under the terms of the Youth Training Scheme, a variety of reasons which still await a definitive analysis, the YTS got off in September to a more limited start than the MSC had planned. The number of young people taking up places is well down on the planned figure of 460,000 – there is a shortfall of about 150,000.

It is going to be extremely important to watch what happens now. Will the Manpower Services Commission's blueprint be realized, notwithstanding the early teething troubles? Will the YTS, as the MSC hopes, become the normal method of entry into employment for all who leave full-time education at the end of the compulsory period, or will it, like the Youth Opportunities Programme before it, end up as just another ad hoc measure to sanitize youth unemployment?

A great deal is going to depend on what is happening on the employment front generally. Most forecasters assume that present levels of unemployment will continue for the next year or two. If, on the other hand, the slight improvement noted in recent months is continued, and if the reason why fewer YTS candidates have been enrolled is because rather more young people have obtained ordinary jobs, there will be a great temptation to forget about long-term plans to create a broad base of vocational preparation on which to build a better system of industrial and commercial education and training, and a rapid reversion to chronic Micawberism.

COMMENT

Belgium shows the way

Belgium may not always have been thought of as a country where the frontiers of education are being rolled back, but recent legislation has given it the highest school-leaving age in Europe, and looks like making it a test-bed for ideas about the 14-19 age group.

The new Compulsory Education Act puts up the leaving age from 14 to 18, in a phased introduction due to be

complete by 1988. This, however, is not quite as dramatic as it sounds since part-time education alternating with on-the-job training will meet the needs of the law.

What the country has done, in effect, is what so many others would like to do but cannot – that is pull together all its tangled strands of training, apprenticeships and vocational education into a coherent, and education-based, legal framework. Of course, the framework is the easiest part, and although the move has wide support in Belgium, people are well aware that in practice all schemes like this which owe their political backing to high youth unemployment figures are inclined to promise more than they can fulfill.

The Government has ambitious plans for a major reform of vocational education, but its budget is vague and

its timetable short. Under the timing of the Act, major changes will need to happen within the next nine months, and there are inevitably, therefore, fears among parents and employers, that the implementation of the reforms will be patchy and incomplete. Yet as this country's experience with the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative has shown, a tight timetable is not necessarily all bad. It is possible to do a surprising amount of good work in a hurry, when the mind is sufficiently concentrated.

The success of Belgium's plans is likely to turn on whether enough of the industry-based sandwich courses, which will be the first choice of many of the new stayers-on, can be provided in time and to the required quality.

A pilot scheme within the textile industry (TES December 12) has worked well. Trainees, whose families

receive family allowance while they are at college, are paid the full rate for the job when they are working, and are guaranteed work for a year after finishing their course.

It is hoped to make these elements common to all schemes, but while the pilot project had a hand-picked intake and much attention lavished on it by all concerned, other training schemes are unlikely to be so lucky.

NO COMMENT

"The fact that she has a career at all she owes to her mother. If it hadn't been for her, I would have probably ended up teaching English just like her." Morgan Partridge, star of *Flamingo Road*, in *Sunday (the News of the World Magazine)* November 1983.

Second opinion

Time to talk to teachers about TVEI

The Government has committed itself to spending £7m in 1983-84 on the first stage of the pilot Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, and £20m on the first full year of the second stage. In total the TVEI will be costing well over £100m in government expenditure. One would therefore think that such a cost-conscious government as the present one would be determined that the scheme should be a success. However, already there are signs in its implementation of serious weaknesses.

When the first plume of the TVEI (then known as the NTVEI – New Technical and Vocational Education Initiative) was launched in January 1983, the letter from the chairman of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) to directors of education in all I.e.s.s in England and Wales ended with the comment:

Finally, it will be important that the projects selected by the commission have the support of those directly concerned in the locality, and that in bringing their schemes into operation, I.e.s.s consult through their normal processes the organizations primarily involved.

A subsequent letter from the MSC clarified the reference to having "the support of those directly concerned in the locality", making it clear that consultations with the teacher associations was essential if projects were to be successful.

Despite this, at its June conference on the TVEI, the union was informed that a number of the 14 I.e.s.s whose submissions had been selected had no representation on their local teacher associations. At a meeting with the MSC in July 1983, the union again raised the issue of consultation, asking for assurances that I.e.s.s would be given adequate time for preparation to allow for this. The MSC indicated that this would be the case.

Nevertheless, despite this assurance and the reiteration of the need for consultation with teachers at the national steering group meeting on September 1, the letter from the MSC chairman to directors of education, announcing the launch of the second phase of the TVEI, in September 1983, included no reference to the need for consultation with teachers.

The NUT nationally has offered both support and advice to its divisional secretaries to aid them in the consultations during the period of preparation by I.e.s.s of submissions for the second phase. It appears, however, from the results of a recent survey carried out by the union, that a number have not been consulted at all and of those that have, some have been given only two or three days' notice of consultative meetings, and further more have been supplied with only minimal information about the proposals. The closing date for submissions to the MSC (December 12) has now passed. Nevertheless, the union believes that the MSC should instruct those I.e.s.s which have not consulted properly to do so before they will be accepted for consideration by the national steering group.

The union has so far taken a very positive approach to the TVEI. At its year's annual conference in Jersey at Easter, a resolution broadly in support of the TVEI was passed, and for consultation including the need for consultation. Since the future success of the TVEI depends largely on retaining the cooperation and commitment of teachers, it is obvious that they must be involved at every stage, including during the preparation of proposals.

The question is how much longer can the NUT and the teaching profession as a whole be expected to support the TVEI if their views continue to be ignored.

Alan Evans

Alan Evans is Senior Official in the Education Department of the National Union of Teachers

NAHT seeks way to stop term time travel among Asians

The National Association of Head Teachers wants urgent action to be taken to curb the annual flow of thousands of Asian children who travel during term time to visit relatives in the Indian sub-continent.

The union has decided to seek meetings with the Commission for Racial Equality and the Department of Education and Science to discuss the problem.

An unofficial estimate suggests that as many as 10,000 Asian youngsters annually opt out of the classroom for trips abroad which can vary from two or three months to several years (see TES, December 9).

The headteachers are concerned about the effect on the children's education and the unfair position it puts a head in when dealing with other children.

Heads have a duty to uphold the principle of compulsory and regular attendance at school. Yet they appear powerless to take action against Asian parents who take or send their children abroad for long periods.

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the NAHT, plans to contact the Commission for Racial Equality to see if it can produce any national statistics on the extent of the problem. He hopes that the commission and his union will discuss ways to persuade Asian parents that allowing youngsters to be out of school for long spells is damaging for their education.

He will also be discussing with the DES the "anomaly" in the present situation which appears to have one set of rules for Asian children and another for home-based children.

The problems faced by schools are summed up by NAHT member Mr Ray Honeyford, head of Drummmond Middle School, Bradford.

Mr Honeyford estimates that at least 1,000 children in the area are sent on family visits to the Indian sub-continent.

not, as a result, suffer serious interruption to their schooling. In his own school, he estimates that at least one-third of the pupils – about 170 – have been affected.

When the children return, their command of English has declined, he says, and they have to attend a special language centre at extra expense.

Writing in the NAHT journal, Mr Honeyford discusses the difficult position heads are placed in when trying to tackle the problem of school attendance. The attitude of the DES, he says, is "curious".

Its legal department, he says, argues that, since a child, whether in Pakistan or India, is not resident in this country, he or she, is therefore outside the English local authority area. Therefore the local education authority has no power to prosecute for non-attendance.

The official view also appears to be that since Asian parents seek a school holiday when their child returns to Britain, the motive was not to keep the child off school.

"The logic of this sort of reasoning defeats me," Mr Honeyford says.

The parents concerned are British citizens permanently resident in Britain. They own or rent property, vote in elections and draw family allowances.

"How can it be, Mr Honeyford asks, that a child who is a British citizen, resident in this country, is not subject to the same rules as other children?"

Mr Honeyford warns that, apart from the ethical, educational and legal questions raised by the practice, there is the even more fundamental question of the effect it might have on the public's perception of, and response to, the Asian community in general.

"Certainly, the indigenous parents in my school look askance at what they consider to be a racially determined attendance policy," he says.

Secretaries still on strike

A strike by school secretaries to Sandwell – which caused the cancellation of some mock examinations – looks set to continue into next term.

The 250 secretaries, who are members of the local government officers' union, NALGO, went on strike after the beginning of November after the Labour-controlled West Midlands authority stopped their pay for refusing to answer telephones in support of a salary regarding claim.

Talks were taking place between the union and local authority officers this week but Mr Eric Faux, Sandwell branch secretary of NALGO, was not optimistic about them.

He accused the authority of "intimidating" the strikers by sending them letters laying them to tear up their union cards and return to work.

The mock examinations had to be cancelled because the TUC-affiliated teachers' union, the National Association of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, refused to do work normally done by secretaries. This includes typing mock examination papers.

More apply for campus places

University applications remain higher than they were at this time last year. Although there are signs that candidates have been getting their forms in earlier than usual, according to the latest figures from the Universities Central Council on Admissions.

With about two thirds of the expected applications in by December 1,

the total was up by 3 per cent compared with the same date last year. The rise among overseas candidates has been particularly marked.

So far there have been "substantial decreases" in applications for French, maths (excluding computing), mechanical engineering, dentistry, geology, and agriculture.

NEWS

Tenure still in firing line

by David Jobbins

Ministers are maintaining their determination to break university academics' tenure, and have confirmed that the Privy Council has been advised to take every opportunity to include dismissal on grounds of redundancy in charters submitted to it for revision.

In a Commons written answer on the eve of the Christmas recess, Mr Peter Brooke, under secretary for higher education, confirmed that Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, has "advised the Privy Council that in his view" provision for dismissal on grounds of redundancy should be made whenever institutions petition for a new or supplementary charter.

At least four institutions have charter changes locked in the system because they are unwilling to make the changes which the Privy Council is demanding.

They are Sussex, University College

Aberystwyth, London University Institute of Education and the new University of Ulster.

But on MP is to challenge the Privy Council to say whether it has reached its view on tenure independently or whether it simply followed Sir Keith's advice.

Dr John Marek, Labour MP for Wrexham, said: "The question is whether the Privy Council's arm is being twisted. I think it is."

"The Privy Council is an independent body and while there is nothing to stop Sir Keith giving it his views, the Privy Council should tell us whether it is taking his views into account and if so why."

"It is clear in practice the Privy Council has accepted Sir Keith's advice, and it now owes universities a duty to say why it has done so."

He is to question the relevant mini-

sters on the constitutional issues and to write to Sir Neville Lee, secretary to the Privy Council.

Dr Marek was, until the June election, a lecturer in applied mathematics at University College Aberystwyth.

Mr John Akker, deputy general secretary of Teachers, attacked the timing of the statement by Mr Brooke as "provocative".

"Universities are only just recovering from the aftermath of the 1981 cuts and the statement demonstrates quite clearly how the Government wishes to use the Privy Council for political purposes which have nothing to do with the proper running of the universities."

"Most universities would, if left to themselves, wish to retain tenure and this has been shown by recent votes in many senates." – *TES*

Head quits because of ILEA 'zealots'

by Nick Wood



Julia Claverdon, (pictured above) director of education for the Industrial Society, has been selected as the final member of the Schools Curriculum Development Committee.

She said: "Everyone who works in industry and commerce should be delighted by this decision. It demonstrates that at last those who organise work in our schools have recognised that school leavers must have had an education that will equip them for the world of work. The future of this country depends on industry and education working together."

Mrs Joan Main, chairman of Wiltshire education committee, has been appointed to serve in place of Dr Barbara Marsh, chairman of Shropshire education committee.

Super teacher's bid page 8

The headmaster of a big London comprehensive has quit his job early, saying that the Inner London Education Authority is being run by political "zealots".

Mr Ted Field, aged 56, left the 1,200-pupil Hampstead comprehensive, where he was head for 17 years, at the end of last term. He told a meeting of parents why he was taking early retirement.

He was afraid of becoming an "ineffectual" headmaster, he said, and also could not accept the "change in style" that had come over the authority in the last three years.

"Increasingly, we are being told what to do by County Hall. Increasingly, every aspect of our work is being evaluated and more and more of my time is taken up in providing information instead of being able to get on with my job."

Mr Field said that many other heads and senior teachers shared his sense of disillusionment. There were 150 applications for his job when he was appointed in 1966. This time there were just 25.

He said that the ruling Labour group was behaving like a "secular Savonarola trying to impose educational virtue on fifteenth century Florence."

It has "all the symptoms of the zealot" and its attitude towards schools and teachers could be summed up as: "If you are not with us, you are against us."

Competing views about how to improve opportunities for blacks and girls were brushed aside by the members of the authority in the drive for a single "correct interpretation", which teachers and parents were expected to accept without question.

"Then there is the confusing speed. One initiative relentlessly follows another. Heads learn about the introduction of graded tests by reading about them in the newspapers. Our teaching staff is suddenly cut by two without any notice because the criteria on the educational priority index have suddenly been changed."

"The results are near catastrophic. Everybody from the education officer down is suddenly under much greater pressure on them."

Mr Field told *The TES* that the ILEA was "the best education authority in the country, but it has been blown off course a bit."

Mr Frances Morrell, leader of the authority, said: "Mr Field is right to say that it is a time of enormous pressure for the authority. What is odd about his remarks is that he makes no reference whatsoever to the principal source of strain and insecurity at all levels and in particular at County Hall – namely, the necessity to defend the authority and its budget against the Government, an objective he is good enough to acknowledge the political leadership is pursuing."

"I'm sorry he disagrees with the multi-ethnic policy. Representatives of London heads have repeatedly pledged their support for it, as have the teacher unions. Also, we are in the middle of serious discussions with London heads about ways of relieving pressure on them."

A jury would decide whether any force used was reasonable, ruled Mr Justice Nourse (sitting with Lord Justice May and Mr Justice Boreham) in dismissing an appeal by a teacher, Mr Murty Taylor, against his conviction for assaulting a 12-year-old pupil.

The success rate – 35 per cent – is fractionally higher than last year, when there were about 9,000 appeals, of which 3,000 found in the parents' favour.

TES

10,000 appeals

Although it was a schoolmaster's right and duty in control and, if necessary, chastise pupils in his care, he must act reasonably, the Appeal Court has ruled.

A jury would decide whether any force used was reasonable, ruled Mr Justice Nourse (sitting with Lord Justice May and Mr Justice Boreham) in dismissing an appeal by a teacher, Mr Murty Taylor, against his conviction for assaulting a 12-year-old pupil.

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PLATFORM

Never mind the system

Gerald Haigh sees the beginning of 1984 as an appropriate date to take stock of teaching's priorities and puts in a plea for more content and a lot less structure

When *The Day After* really comes, and the severe looking, green men in purple kaffians gather round their golden telescopes on the far edge of the galaxy and contemplate the fragment of flowing pumice which once was Planet Earth, at least one of them is sure to say: "The problem was, they believed in systems."

Our faith in systems seems absolute. Without a proper system of pre and post-natal care we cannot successfully be born. Without a proper penal system we cannot retain possession of our wallets and videos after dark. And unless we stuff the pinnacles, skies and oceans with an unbelievably lethal system of chemical weapons, then we cannot successfully live in peace with one another.

The very word "systematic", which in civilisation founded upon imagination and inspiration would be a deadly insult, is for us a term of approbation. The world is now run by people who cannot move a muscle unless they can look on a chart and see what is going to happen next.

If you doubt this, or are tempted to believe that education is in some way proof against the trend, then consider the school which recently advertised a Scale Four post for a "Timetabler". What bothered me about this was not so much the thing itself - the realization that our honourable calling has come to such a pass - but the thought of sane human beings sitting in a room deciding to appoint a Timetabler without once feeling the urge to scream and beat their heads against the wall. Still

there is residual satisfaction in knowing that somebody is supporting the "Orwell was right" lobby.

The systemist philosophy manifests itself in plenty of other ways. For example, the exotic belief that educational standards can be improved by systematically testing children in a narrow range of skills currently flourishes in Croydon. This is like trying to prevent heart disease by taking everybody's pulse, with the added refinement that if too many of the pulses turn out to be slack, then a few heart specialists can be sacked to encourage the others.

Another characteristic of systemism is the principle of conservation by sub-logical retrogressive holistic system substitution. What this means is that where a system has been shown to be inadequate, then it has to be replaced entirely by another, even if the only available replacement is an older system which was even worse.

This explains why people who are fed up with cars start getting enthusiastic about trams, canal boats and walking. Thus in education we are treated to the spectacle of people with normal brains calmly considering the reintroduction of 11-plus selection. Mind you, in the next incarnation it seems to be only grammar schools that are

coming back - at any rate you never hear anyone mention secondary moderns.

It seems to me, too, that a systemist red herring may be flopping about in the recent HMI report on 9 to 13 schools. A fair number of the criticisms made are surely applicable to any kind of school containing children of that age. "In English and maths the work was often narrowly conceived. Comprehensiveness, grammar and spelling formed a considerable part of English" and so on.

What is under discussion here is the whole question of how we teach children in the 9 to 13 group. It would be unsurprising but still very sad if the report were used simply as evidence upon which to base a further reshuffle of the system without the direction of any attention to the detail of what is to be done at the level of teacher and pupil.

The systemist preoccupation is now completely endemic at all levels. If we wish to raise reading standards, we try to think of a good system which will do the trick. If we want to improve the lot of children with special educational needs, we can apparently only do it with the aid of a towering bureaucratic procedure. What should be a matter of cajoling, touching, persuading, loving and teaching is now all too often gathered up into the world of forms,

charts and conferences.

I suggest that what we need to do in 1984, of all years, is look again at what we mean by "teaching" and "education" and then vow with solemnity and vehemence that we will resist all further attempts on the part of the people with briefcases to subvert the transcendental purposes of our calling.

The point is that education is not essentially about systems at all. It is concerned with imagination and creativity. The prime purpose of the teacher is to liberate the imagination so that pupils may grow and mature as creative and autonomous people. Good teachers have always been able to do this, and will continue to do so regardless of where they find themselves. What is important about a teacher is not what system he works in, or uses, or believes in, but whether he can, at that narrow glinting point where all the systems and methods converge, strike sparks from the pupils around.

It follows very clearly from this that what those who run the education service ought to be doing almost to the exclusion of everything else is helping the teacher to strike those sparks. Thus, for example, they should be sending him on weekend courses where he is allowed and encouraged to

do his own work - to paint, write, do mathematics, build treehouses and play music. They should not, on the other hand, be spending precious resources on sending him away to listen to lectures about timetabling, or Acts of Parliament. Still less should he be subjected to courses on management techniques. Compare the performance of teachers and managers over the past 20 years and then consider who should be the lecturers and who the lectured at.

Likewise, the aim should be as far as possible to remove from the head and the teacher in school those chores and procedures which detract from the maintenance of the flow of creative energy. The question is not so much whether this can be done as whether the will exists to do it. Systems, after all, are very earnest entities - humours, arrogant and depressingly serious in intent. This means that they have the power to inveigle innocent folk, and are very difficult to get rid of.

If you doubt me, try suggesting in your staffroom that it might be worth considering how to run a school with no timetable and little formal structure. Teachers would wait in their classrooms and teach children who chose to appear during the day. Whether you think this is at least a tenable starting point for a debate on how a school could work on the one hand, or whether you dismiss the notion out of hand as insane and unworkable on the other, is a good measure of how thoroughly you have been bamboozled by the systemist.

NEWS

It's a word, it's a name it's . . . Super-person

by Richard Garner

A primary school has renamed Super-man "super-person" in an effort to teach peace studies and sexual equality in one fell swoop.

The way the new genderless hero has helped is highlighted in a document produced by Labour-controlled Avon County Council, setting out guidelines for the way peace education should be taught in schools.

It gives several anonymous examples of how schools have already introduced the subject and says that one primary school took advantage of the fact that children had returned from their Christmas holidays eager to talk about Superman, which they had seen on television.

The document, *Peace Education - Guidelines for primary and secondary schools*, says the headteacher asked pupils: "What does Superman mean?" "The first part of the word was taken first - super - and the children were asked to give other words as alternative meanings. The words the children gave were - terrific, fantastic, great, lovely, good."

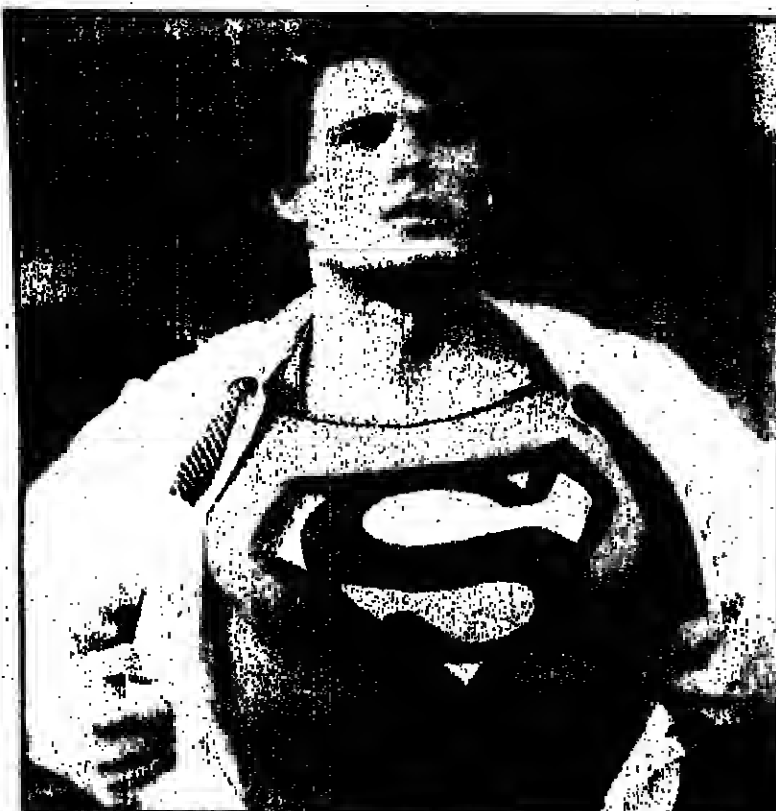
"Then the children were asked how Superman behaved. Although they were eager to talk about his strength, it was clear from the discussion that followed that the children were very aware he did good things."

"The children then gave the words to describe Superman - thoughtful, strong, kind, caring, helpful, gentle, loving etc. The children had enjoyed the discussion, and when they returned to the classrooms were eager to talk to their own teachers about it."

The next morning, the document continues, the children were asked what they could do to become a super-person - "challenged to include the girls - and they quickly responded with 'to be kind and loving, to help one another, to be gentle, etc.'"

"It was obvious that the children wanted to identify themselves with 'super person'."

It goes on to say that the label "super" was then applied to placed and things around the school, and the



children discussed how they could be "superior" in their everyday lives.

The document says that discussion about the nuclear arms issue is only one aspect of peace education.

It adds: "In fact, peace education does not advocate opposition nor demand a pacifist attitude. It does reject the eager willingness to resolve all issues by force and argues that in spite of vast experience and sometimes overwhelming difficulties involved, every effort should be made to seek resolution of conflict in non-violent ways."

It says that "bias" is inevitable in that all teachers bring their own perceptions, understandings, and

values to the topics and issues they teach - but concludes that it is "no more likely in peace education than in any other subject dealing with human behaviour."

"Peace education rejects the aim of political indoctrination and this has to be shown to be the case in practice", it adds. "It is no more open to the charge of planned or actual political indoctrination than any other subject on the curriculum."

The document adds: "If respect for peace and peaceful behaviour is not implicit (as well as explicit) in our teaching, the message the student is likely to receive is that peace, as a value, is not important."

I.e. a sort for peace studies

by Nick Wood

Two in three I.e.s.s. say that peace studies are taught in their schools.

The nuclear arms race, violence and war, international understanding, disarmament and the Government's defence policy are some of the topics most often covered in the classroom.

These are the main findings of a survey of authorities throughout the United Kingdom. Ninety-three replied to a questionnaire sent out by researchers at Lancaster University.

A quarter of the authorities said that peace studies appeared as a subject on the school timetable. A further two-fifths said that it was taught through other parts of the curriculum.

The researchers, Dr Paul Smoker, director of the Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research at the university, and Professor Hanna-Fred Rathenow of the Berlin Technical University, report that the political complexity of I.e.s.s. has a major bearing on whether peace studies is taught in schools.

One in three Labour-controlled authorities timetabled the subject in their schools - three times more than the number of Conservative-run authorities taking this approach.

But when direct and indirect teaching of peace studies are taken together, schools in Labour I.e.s.s. are subject to those in Tory areas.

Surprisingly, peace studies is most widely taught in authorities where no one party has overall control.

The sharpest political divide arises from whether or not an I.e.s.s. has set up a curriculum working party on peace studies. One in three of the Labour councils have, or intend to set up, such a body, compared with none of the Conservative councils.

Only six I.e.s.s. said that they have prepared peace packs for schools.

Peace education in Great Britain: Some Results of a Survey, Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research, 1983.

Fixed-term contracts campaign

The National Union of Teachers is to lead a campaign for a change in the law to give greater protection for teachers engaged on fixed-term contracts.

The union has been worried about the growth in the number of fixed-term contracts used by local education authorities. Figures given to the union's annual conference showed that the vast majority of these contracts were being given to women teachers - 4,125 as opposed to 178 to men.

Now the union's executive is to urge the TUC to press for amendments to existing employment protection legislation to stop employers using the contracts as a means of engaging employees while contemplating redundancy at a future time. It is tabling a motion for the TUC women's conference next year, claiming that this form of contract is "inherent in direct discrimination against women employees."

The NUT wants all employees on fixed-term contracts, or in temporary or part-time employment, to be given the same protection by the law as full-time employees.

In particular, it wants the TUC's general council to campaign to remove all existing qualifications in respect of employment rights - such as a limitation on the number of hours worked. The NUT also wants to remove the provision whereby teachers on fixed-term contracts have their rights to redundancy unfairly dismissed upon termination.

In addition, the NUT plans to urge the women's conference - to be held in Torquay in March - to campaign for courses in technology to be made equally available to both girls and boys.

Their action also calls on local education authorities, school governing bodies, parent/teacher organizations, the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education and other bodies "to promote debate and discussion among parents in order to encourage a social climate that would be conducive to girls choosing curriculum and career paths according to their own inclinations."

Richard Garner

Rampton racism theory disputed by new survey

by Nick Wood

New evidence casts doubt on the central conclusion of the controversial Rampton Report - that West Indian children do badly at school because of "unintentional racism" on the part of their teachers.

Research by Mr Geoffrey Short, a psychology lecturer at New College, Durham, who conducted a survey of primary teachers, concludes that this finding is not supported by the facts. Teachers do not make sweeping generalizations about children on the basis of their ethnic background and label all West Indians as dull and uncooperative.

"An indictment of unintentional racism is difficult to uphold in relation to West Indian children and seems a singularly inappropriate description of the way teachers perceive Asian children," Mr Short writes in the latest issue of *The Durham and Newcastle Research Review*.

In a later interview, he said: "English teachers don't have racial stereotypes, or, if they are aware of them, they don't operate according to them. They treat each child on his merits."

"I am very sceptical of Rampton's allegation, based on the impression given from talking to teachers and West Indian parents, that everybody brought up in our society will adopt cultural stereotypes unthinkingly and act in accordance with them."

Commenting on the fact that West Indian children are five or six times less likely to get five or more O-level passes than whites and Asians, Mr Short said it was "far too easy" for their parents to attribute such underachievement to

racism among teachers. Some other factor may be responsible. His conclusions stem from the answers to 31-point questionnaires distributed to 65 teachers at 11 primary schools in working class areas of a London borough. The teachers were asked to comment on the behaviour, motivation, intelligence and academic attainments of white, West Indian and Asian children, aged 5 to 12.

Unlike earlier research in this field, the teachers gave separate information on boys and girls.

Analysis of the replies failed to reveal any rigid divisions along racial lines. For instance, although the teachers said that West Indian boys were less hard-working than their English counterparts, they described their classroom behaviour as broadly similar - a judgment that conflicts with the racial stereotype of West Indians as uncooperative pupils.

On the other hand, popular perceptions were borne out in the case of girls. West Indians being seen as both recalcitrant and poorly motivated in comparison with their English and Asian counterparts.

Mr Short says that this inconsistency in teachers' perceptions poses a powerful challenge to the charge that they are slaves to a cultural ethos that denigrates West Indians.

Comparison of English and Asian children also threw up attitudes running against the grain of racial stereotypes. Contrary to expectation, Asian girls were said to have more

sensuous attitude to work than their English counterparts. As expected, they were also better behaved, but this did not mean they were more enjoyable to teach. Teachers found them less sociable than English girls and lacking in a sense of humour.

Nur did teachers uncritically subscribe to the view that West Indian children have a special talent for sport and music. They said that they were no more musical than whites and Asians and made important distinctions between boys and girls when it came to sport. West Indian girls do have an edge in this area - West Indian boys do not, the teachers said.

"The policy implications of this type of study depend crucially upon whether the evidence is an accurate reflection of classroom reality or, as Rampton claims, the product of a collective imagination warped by groundless but widespread prejudice", Mr Short writes.

"While the present study cannot establish the truth of the racial profiles it describes, it does offer circumstantial evidence that cautions against a wholesale acceptance of 'unintentional racism' as the major influence on teachers' perceptions."

"For example, the sex differences that distinguished the classroom behaviour comparisons involving West Indian children have no parallel in any cultural stereotype; and thus, if teachers are influenced more by sociocultural attitudes than by their own classroom experiences, the sex differences should not have emerged."



The Home Office is likely to decide soon on a deportation date for eight-year-old Nezha Benkhlef and her mother after the failure of their second appeal against deportation. Though Nezha is a Moroccan, she has spent most of her life in England, and staff at George Eliot Junior School, St John's Wood, London, are among those who have supported her application to remain here. Mrs Benkhlef lost her right to stay after her marriage broke up and her husband returned to Algeria. "People say we must be sent to Morocco," Nezha said. "My friends at school come from many places, some are Chinese, Indian, African, Greek. They can all stay. I have never lived in Morocco, I don't understand why I must go there." Mrs Benkhlef was particularly worried by the sort of education Nezha would face - overcrowded classes, rote learning, harsh punishment, and an unfamiliar language.

NEWS

Authorities must sell or raid to pay for projects

by Biddy Passmore

Most local education authorities who want to start new capital projects next year will have to pay for them by selling surplus buildings and land - or raiding the allocations for other services.

The Government has told English education authorities they may spend up to £300.1m on building and major equipment in 1984-85. That is an increase of only £5.5m on the current year's allocation and all but £40m of it is already committed.

The allocations, sent out before Christmas in letters to I.e.s.s., were hauled by many councils as inadequate, especially where school rolls are falling or growing fast.

The Department of Education says it has been possible to allow far new spending only where it has been subsidised that "exceptional circumstances apply". The Education Secretary has tried to give priority to new work on further education projects, school projects connected with the removal of surplus places, and computers and other equipment for further education.

But the letter reminds councils of their "freedoms" under the 1980 Act which should enable them to finance further projects.

Governors' chairman

The governors of Highbury Grove school have ousted their Tory chairman and voted in a parent governor with no political affiliations, in a move which some observers are saying could have a significant effect on the atmosphere and developments in this prominent north London comprehensive.

The new chairman, Mr Peter Saunderson, is thought likely to offer a tougher challenge to the school over issues such as the exam results of average and below average children.

Teacher training places lost

The governors of De La Salle College, Manchester, have decided to keep the college open despite the loss of its teacher training place.

Since August, 1982, the Catholic college has fought to keep its teacher training places, which represented well over 60 per cent of college academic activity. The end of teacher training was confirmed by Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, at the end of September.

In deciding to continue to recruit for its diversified courses, the governors have refused two other options, that of closing or of remaining open but suspending intake of students until the outcome of the current review of colleges by the National Advisory Board.

Rule stops candidate

A move to allow Ms Sue Adams, a part-time teacher in Bexley, to stand as a candidate in the elections for the executive of the National Union of Teachers turned down in a final vote.

The executive turned down a motion which sought to declare that the union's rules did not prevent her from standing. Instead, leaders of the NUT will press to change the union's rules to allow part-timers to stand following next year's conference. The Equal Opportunities Commission has said the rule preventing Ms Adams from standing is a "clear-cut" case of discrimination.

Ms Adams had been nominated to stand as one of the candidates for election to the four seats for Outer London on the union's executive.

Staff threaten to fight jobs axe

by Richard Garner

Teachers in Lancashire have given a warning that they may resort to industrial action over a plan by the county council to cut 66 teaching posts by the beginning of next term.

Members of the Lancashire division of the National Union of Teachers say they are opposed to axing teachers' jobs in the middle of the school year - and fear that remedial education and examination classes may be affected by the decision. If this happens, they may refuse to cover classes taken by the teacher whose jobs have disappeared.

The decision to cut back was taken by Labour councillors after they had been told that the authority had 66 extra teachers on its books - and was in danger of suffering severe financial penalties from the Government next year if the resulting £400,000 "overspending" was allowed to continue.

Mr Frank Shuttleworth, general secretary of the Lancashire division of the NUT, said: "We recognize that in many ways this administration has attempted to improve the quality of education our children receive, but it

cut the number of teachers in a school in the middle of a school year will have terrible consequences."

"How can a headteacher plan a school's work in such circumstances? How can we improve the reading of our children when special remedial classes have to be taken away? Are O-level and CSE examination classes to disappear from parts of a school's timetable?"

Mr Andrew Collier, Lancashire's chief education officer, said: "It doesn't mean taking teachers away from examination classes for youngsters who are doing examinations next summer. There may be one or two circumstances where in ideal circumstances we would not have lost a teacher, but we believe this move is in our long-term interests to contain our expenditure."

He added: "We are also not setting out to remove remedial teachers from our schools". The cut would be achieved by not filling posts which became vacant as teachers left.

No action to be taken on mock hanging

A teacher who organized a mock hanging in school will not face disciplinary action.

Darren Wixson, aged 15, was photographed with a noose round his neck by Mr Robert Hooper, the teacher, during an art lesson at Tavistock Comprehensive, West Devon.

A girl pupil held the rope taut as others watched - and when the picture was published in a national newspaper,

Devon Education Authority launched an inquiry.

A special committee has now decided at a meeting in Easter that no disciplinary action should be taken. The chief education officer, Mr Jaslyn Owen, said the committee had taken a very serious view of the incident, and reminded teachers of the dangers of overstepping the line of "public taste and acceptability".

SPAIN

Iain Fraser Grigor on the post-Franco Basque revival

Post-Franco autonomy has been good to the Basques, and their political leaders have been quick to grasp its advantages – not least in the promotion of the language they perceive as central to their national identity.

During the long years of fascism the language was bitterly oppressed. In the Vitoria headquarters of the recently-established autonomous government the story is told of the school-child whose tongue was impaled on a sentence in Basque; while in many schools any child caught speaking Basque was compelled to wear a special ring as a form of disgrace.

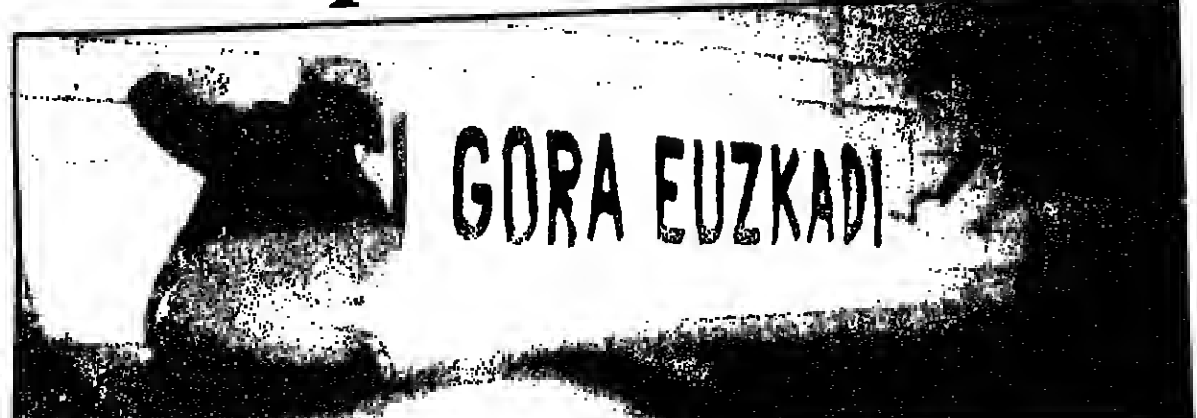
Popular response to Madrid's language policy was not of course unidimensional, and some hundreds of nationalist prisoners in the dictator's jails used their time there to learn Basque – but the long-term effects were debilitating.

By the early 1970s, the proportion of speakers may have fallen towards 20 per cent, while those who were literate in the language composed only a small fraction of this figure.

But with the death of Franco in 1975, agitation flared in the Basque provinces (14 general strikes and 40 nationalist deaths in three years), and in 1980 a parliament was elected to represent the 2.1 million Basques of the autonomous region (there are another half-million in Navarre and 200,000 in the French 'northern provinces').

In the field of education and post-school cultural provision for the language, the new administration has moved with remarkable speed and decisiveness. During the last decade of Franco, certainly, perhaps as many as

The forbidden tongue learns to speak freely again



Emerging from the shadows: The Basque language ("Long live the Basques") is coming back into its own.

15 per cent of the school population had attended the semi-secret and privately-run "Ikastola" schools, where the medium of teaching was primarily Basque, though demand from non-Basque speakers eventually drove them towards a bilingual mode of instruction.

To capitalize on this base, the autonomous government quickly allocated half of its entire budget (of 67 million pesetas (£285,000)) on education and culture, and last July introduced the degree of bilingualism which renders Basque obligatory in all schools (though higher education, still within the control of Madrid, is for the moment exempt).

According to Señor Xiza Gardner of

the autonomous government's education department, "Children can in principle avoid compulsory Basque, but under difficult conditions – they must be able to prove that they don't reside here permanently. For instance, or they substantially commenced their education beyond the frontiers of the Basque country."

"Otherwise, children must now attend an all-Basque school, with Spanish as a foreign language; an all-Spanish school with seven hours of compulsory Basque a week; or one of the model D schools (there is no letter C in the alphabet) where instruction is bilingual. It will take another couple of years to get the system running smoothly, but the trend is upwards all

the time."

Both for the current and the next school session, the bulk of the education budget will go on the production of Basque-language books (at a rate of 100 new titles a year) and in what Señor Gardner calls "the critical area of teacher training".

At the moment the teacher training colleges are geared to producing 2,000 mainly Spanish-speaking teachers a year, whereas the education department only needs 400 mainly-Basque speaking teachers a year. Hence, the seven colleges are being strongly urged to switch their output from Spanish-fluent to Basque-fluent teachers – to which is added the persuasive effect of falling rolls and high unemployment in

the Basque economy.

And for established teachers, there is an extensive (and expensive) in-service programme involving a high proportion (some 4,000) of the nation's teaching force in a day-release or evening-class Basque fluency course, while at a higher level some hundreds of specialists are removed from their schools on full pay for up to 10 months and given intensive five-hours-a-day instruction in the language, leading to a diploma in Basque language teaching proficiency.

Given the newness of these provisions, there is some uncertainty as to the extent to which they are being applied, and Señor Gardner admits that they do have a problem in some areas with the standard of Basque being taught and being learned, and still lack a sufficiency of teachers equipped with his department's proficiency diploma.

But he is confident that the programme has been a success to date; and according to Rubert Pastor, editor in Vitoria of the bilingual daily *Deia*, the educational changes have had an immense effect on encouraging the language.

"There is no doubt at all about this," he says. "Things can only improve too – because all our children now learn the language at school, it's clear that in 10 or 15 years the number of people who can read and write the language will be very high."

This month, according to Señor Pastor, the Basque television service Euskal Telebista, established last January, is increasing its output to 40 hours a week.

And when a local novelist recently won one of the government's prizes for Basque writing, says Señor Pastor, "he said at the award ceremony that more books had been published in Basque in the last four years than in the last five centuries. This gives you some idea of the progress we have made since autonomy – and I think it's true to say we have only begun."

Redressing the imbalance of classes

WEST GERMANY

University survey

The first study of performance at a comprehensive university – the prototype reform university of Essen (UEG) – has yielded some surprising results.

The study – carried out by Professor Josef Hiltpass, director of the Institute of Educational Science at Bonn University – observed students who started in 1974 and 1975 and was completed this year. Despite considerable differences in ability among the students, success was achieved by two different groups in the final exam.

Comprehensive universities (the first five founded by the SPD/FDP government of North Rhine-Westphalia in 1972) aimed to increase the proportion of working class children at university by admitting those with entrance qualifications for polytechnics (Fachhochschule) as well as those with the *Abitur*, the traditional university entrance requirement acquired at *Gymnasien* (grammar schools).

The long and short integrated courses at UEG observed in this report – economic science, mechanical engineering, construction engineering,

maths, physics and chemistry – contained a mixture of students with ambition, endurance, interest

Of course, political critics of the comprehensive university concept expected a drop in standards to result from broadening the entrance requirements. Professor Hiltpass's study is therefore a feather in the cap of the UEG, but cannot be said to apply automatically to all comprehensive universities.

By means of a test of academic ability (TAB) Professor Hiltpass established that the new students with *Abitur* (As) were a significant ten points ahead of those with other qualifications (NAs). A repeat of this test after two and four years obtained the same results, although the average standard had risen slightly. In the intermediate exam, the As again did better than the NAs, only 39 per cent of whom passed first time.

Between the intermediate and final exams, however, the gap closed. Moreover, they took the same length of time to complete their courses, yet another surprise for the educational world.

Professor Hiltpass does not attribute their success to a lowering of standards, but comments: "Obviously, the members of this group (NAs) counter these 'deficits' (lower initial intellectual ability) ... with other academically relevant personal qualities such

as ambition, endurance, interest

Greater equality of opportunity was also achieved. Forty per cent of As and 56.2 per cent of NAs among the new students were from working class homes, and they gained better marks on the long course than those bigger up the social ladder (but did worse on the short course).

The ideal of short courses remains unfulfilled. After two years basic study for everyone, the integrated course should fork into a short branch (one more year) and a long one (two more years). Only about 25 per cent of students (most of them NAs) took the short course, and the two years basic study expanded to nearly three and a half years, the short course taking a total of nearly six years and the long one just over six and a half years.

Even these sobering statistics cannot entirely cloud the social success of the UEG in terms of greater opportunities for working class children. And 85 per cent of long course graduates and 70 per cent of short course graduates, whose salaries caught up with those of the former after two years in work, said they would choose the UEG again a second time round.

Professor Hiltpass declared the results of his study had astonished him: "I was a sceptical observer before. I began," he said, "now I've been neutralized."

and foster ideals which put the interests of the country before all else."

Under the requirements listed in the circular, patriotic education will begin in the first grade of primary school with instruction about the national flag, insignia and anthem, and familiarization with China's territory and capital. Primary and middle schools are to institutionalize flag-raising ceremonies, and the national anthem is to be sung at all important school events.

Patriotic education is to be integrated with all subjects, and in order to strengthen their "confidence in China's socialist modernization", students will regularly learn about the Government's current policies and the "national achievements in construction".

Schools should also make full use of the patriotic theme during extracurricular activities such as class meetings, essay and speech contests and reading and singing activities, says the circular.

● Gansu – an arid, backward province in north-central China – is set to benefit from an intensive re-planting drive, thanks to the efforts of 132 million young people.

Aged between 17 and 28 years and all from northern China, they collected more than 500 tons of grass and tree seeds for Gansu, in response to a call from the Communist Youth League (CYL) and the Ministries of Education, Forestry and Agriculture, and Animal Husbandry and Fisheries.

The campaign followed a visit to Gansu in July by Communist Party general secretary, Hu Yaobang, who called for efforts to increase vegetation to curb soil erosion and improve the ecological environment by planting grass and trees. Wang Zhaoguo, secretary of CYL central committee, asked members of youth organizations, and students, each to contribute 30 grams of seeds for the next 10 years.

Third union threat

Phil Gunson reports on a new government take-over bid

For the third time in a year, the Honduran government is trying to take over a teacher union. This time the victim is the secondary school teachers' organization called COPEMH.

The government, using a minority movement within the union known as the Francisco Morales movement, tried hard to rig last month's union elections. Delegates were shipped into the conference venue, and threatened with losing their jobs unless they followed the government line.

That ploy failed, but the movement is now challenging the election results in the Supreme Court. In similar cases in the past, the court has always ruled in favour of the minority, pro-Government faction.

In 1982, in the first demonstration of what has now become a familiar technique, the government moved against COLPROSUMAH, the larger and more militant of the primary school teachers' associations.

This union had played a prominent part in a bitter strike, which the government had broken by selective dismissals, threats, and the physical ejection of teachers from the schools they were occupying.

Taking advantage of the union's annual delegate meeting, paid government agents, acting as delegates, questioned through the courts the legitimacy of its biggest delegation. Although the legal basis of the 'seton' was dubious, and the court's pro-government ruling unlawful, union leaders obeyed the order to suspend the offending branch.

● Pledge on missing teachers

A delegation from the National Union of Teachers has secured a pledge from the Foreign Office that it will investigate the plight of 26 named teachers who have disappeared in El Salvador.

The delegation, led by Mr. Doo Winter, the NUT president, met Baroness Young, Minister of State at the Foreign Office with special respon-

sibility for Central America. She heard that 315 teachers had been killed in El Salvador since 1981, 700 had disappeared and a further 4,000 had been forced into exile.

Baroness Young agreed to a request from the delegation urging her to condemn the right-wing government of El Salvador, which has used death squads to kill political opponents.

Hasty answers still need quick action

BELGIUM

Anne Goodyear gives details of a major education reform

The Belgian Government is congratulating itself on the fact that, after 25 years of stalemate, the new right-wing coalition has achieved in a matter of months what amounts to a major reform of the education system.

The new Compulsory Education Act, passed, some would say with unseemly haste and little consultation, by the Belgian government in July last year, extends the school-leaving age from 14 to 18. By 1988, Belgium will have the highest school leaving age in Europe. Whether it will also have achieved the major reforms in vocational orientation envisaged within the Act remains to be seen.

Planned reforms include the establishment of more effective training workshops within schools, the incorporation of existing apprenticeships into the education system and, more fundamentally, the establishment of a sandwich course option for 16 to 18-year-olds within industry.

The timing of the Act means that the government has only nine months to implement the promised changes, or it will risk the charge that the new law is merely a cosmetic cover for an embarrassing unemployment figure. In August 1983, approximately one-third of young people under 25 (158,692) were unemployed.

Even considering the gradual raising of the school-leaving age – which will eventually affect 43,000 pupils who would otherwise leave before 18 – the reforms worry parents and youth workers, particularly those in the most strident areas where opposition has been strongest. They fear that, like the promised overhaul of the vocational schools more than 10 years ago, the reforms will be patchy, perhaps ill-thought out, and may lead to greater problems of discipline and truancy.

Plans to integrate the new and possibly unwilling pupils into the education system are inevitably at an early stage; indeed even the budgets are remarkably vague. The Francophone sector (with 44 per cent of the population) estimates the cost of the reforms for the final school term of 1983 at 200m Belgian francs (£2.5m), and certainly more in 1984. But according to the Flemish, who refuse even to give an estimate, costs will in fact remain stable because of falling rolls.

The budget will have to cover not only the much vaunted sandwich course (known as *formation en alternance*). There is also likely to be an

expansion or restructuring of the vocational schools which already take those pupils unable to follow general or technical school. Day-release courses, currently compulsory for young people on apprenticeships, but administered by the Belgian equivalent of the Department of Trade, are to be recognized as fulfilling the obligation for part-time education after 16.

Particularly while the sandwich courses are being set up, it is likely that most of the young people who would have otherwise been unemployed will find their way into the vocational schools which provide training in a range of skills, like hairdressing, catering, carpentry, basic mechanics, window dressing and so on.

The standards of these schools tend to be variable, although in the Flemish areas substantial reform of teaching methods has been rewarded with some success. For example, the Coloma Institute in Mechelen, near Brussels, one of the largest vocational training schools in the country, boasts low discipline problems and an 85 per cent employment record among its students. The school attempts to do away with the formal discipline of traditional schools and the emphasis is on practical learning first, theory later.

Where the reforms are incomplete, however, adaptations to cope with a new influx of older pupils are likely to be problematic and possibly expensive. This is particularly true in the Francophone sector, where there is also a strong feeling of unease at the prospect of education becoming little more than a production line turning out pegs for industry's holes.

The influential parents' organization *Fédération Nationale des Associations de Parents de l'Enseignement* (FNAPE) is not opposed in principle, but, as its spokeswoman, Madame Therese Locoge, explained: "We do ask for a guarantee that the extra years will mean something. Our fear is that the young people concerned by the extension of the school leaving age will be those, let's say, who are the most difficult."

"They have suffered many failures, sometimes social problems, and we are afraid that if things are imposed upon them they will be really difficult."

A delay of one year to plan out the content of the final year's schooling would help to make the changeover less painful and the end product more worthwhile, she feels.

The Francophone Catholic Youth Council, the only organization to oppose the new law in principle, worries also about the financial and legal status of the trainees, particularly on sandwich courses within industry.

While families will be entitled to

family allowances as long as the child remains in full-time education, plans for ensuring an additional income for those on sandwich courses are still unformulated.

Mr Yves de Graft, secretary general of the Institut Central des Cadres, and a member of the council said: "There is always talk of the need to integrate these young people into society. But if it is to work, integration must be on all levels – social, cultural and economic. They must have some sort of remuneration, the chance to handle their own budget."

But according to the Belgian Employers' Federation (*Fédération des Entreprises de Belgique*), if training is to be training and not just cheap labour, any payment must come from the state.

FEB is an enthusiastic supporter of the raising of the school leaving age, for which it has been lobbying for more than four years. Nevertheless, considering that many of the professional schools are not fully equipped to equip pupils for the workplace, the federation is anxious that the reforms should mean something other than simply "more of the same."

Mr Frans Tiebout, assistant adviser in FEB's Training and Employment department, said: "For this reason, although we are in favour of the reforms we have some problems with the timing. You can't say that you will start sandwich courses next year, if you have not prepared industry."

"The models for the *formation en alternance* are likely to be established on a local level, and could include training in one company, a group of companies, or the establishment of factory workshops within schools."

Nevertheless, certain decisions will question of payment to trainees or the guarantee of jobs after training.

"I think the most important things will be to get the contracts clear between business and schools on a local level, and to define the position of young people on *alternance*," Mr Tiebout said.

"It is possible that what we learn in the *alternance* training could be used also in general and technical training to see how companies could be involved in the education system."

"But the problem at the moment is that with less than a year to go we do not know whether we will be required to pay these young people, how many people we will be taking or exactly what sort of training we will be required to give them. We think it is very important that these reforms in the law are carried out properly, but if the burden on the companies is too great, they will not work."

Schools in the Faroe Islands vary vastly in size – the largest catering for 650 pupils, while in some remote *bygds* or settlements, schools exist with only one pupil. The education system on the islands is predominantly state-run, there existing only two private schools and one independent folk high school. There are 8,700 school pupils in the



Island connexion: 97 per cent of young people are now able to attend school far 10 years without having to leave home.

Nordic expansion

DENMARK

Christopher Follett reports on how the Faroe Islands are meeting their education needs

For a straggling island fishing community like the Faroe Islands, schooling can present a big problem. Recent years have, however, seen a remarkable expansion in school building in the isolated 18-island North Atlantic archipelago, reducing the need for boarding schools and special accommodation for children, and decentralizing education from the capital, Torshavn, on the main island of Streymoy, and the other important town, Klaksvik, on the northern island of Borloy.

Thirty years ago, virtually only these two centres were capable of offering pupils education beyond the primary and lower secondary school or *folkeskole* level. Today there are 71 *folkeskoler* in the Faeroes, of which an impressive 18 offer two and three year supplementary continuation courses beyond the obligatory compulsory school years.

The Faeroese education department estimates that 97 per cent of young people are now able to attend *folkeskole* for the maximum 10 years without having to leave home (98 per cent of all Faroe schoolchildren continue in the optional extra eighth to tenth grades). Similarly, 80 per cent of young Faroes can attend *gymnasium* from home now, the situation being helped immensely by the completion last year of a new upper secondary school on the eastern island of Eysturoy.

Schools in the Faroe Islands vary vastly in size – the largest catering for 650 pupils, while in some remote *bygds* or settlements, schools exist with only one pupil. The education system on the islands is predominantly state-run, there existing only two private schools and one independent folk high school. There are 8,700 school pupils in the

Meanwhile, Greenland, which achieved home rule under Denmark in 1979, is to open its first university in January. The Inuit (Eskimo) Institute, as it is to be called, will be situated in Godthaab, the capital. It is to have 14 students initially, the accent being on Greenlandic and Eskimo language, history, culture and civilization.

One important effect of the decentralization, diversification and improvement of the Faeroese educational system in the 1960s and 1970s has been to scotch the brain-drain from the archipelago – the Faeroese population is growing and the islands enjoy a high standard of living.

ing the teachers' official work, the creation of unequal opportunity at entrance exam time (since it is only well-to-do parents that can afford such cramming) and the loss to the community of the brighter brains who are outpaced by the well-trained pupils, add up to "a bouquet of malodorous flowers". In the opinion of the authorities here.

Mr G. Makrisarini, deputy minister of higher and secondary vocational education in Georgia, blames the schools for the appearance of private cramming on such a scale. "We do not always furnish the knowledge required for college enrolment."

But the problem goes deeper. Unlevel education in the Soviet Union is a highly coveted goal with both moral and material incentives. Demand outstrips supply, and, as usual anywhere in the world, enterprising individuals take advantage of the situation.

However much it might be acknowledged, openly discussed and publicly discouraged, it is hard to imagine how the practice could ever be brought fully under control.

Private tutors in Georgia are known to work with groups of as many as 50 pupils. The difficulty of keeping their activities quiet led to some using a car as a mobile classroom, or taking their pupils out into the woods for lessons.

The tax evasion, negligence and

Where the taxman trails the tutor

SOVIET UNION

Jennifer Louie describes a flourishing, but clandestine, private enterprise

Secondary education is compulsory in the Soviet Union. Eight years spent at school may be followed by a two-year technical course, with school subjects at evening classes, for those in a hurry to leave, or others for 10 years.

Teachers used to have difficulty in persuading children to stay on, but now that the number of pupils who can move up into classes 9 and 10 is limited, there seems to be growing interest in staying on until 17 or 18, usually with a view to taking a degree course later.

Enrolment for university level studies depends upon competitive entrance exams. With compulsory secondary education, free tuition and a single syllabus followed nationwide, it would seem that the system guarantees the best students the privilege of higher education. Reality, however,

falls somewhat short of theory.

For several years now a special form of private enterprise has been flourishing, and despite all official attempts to curtail it, it has become a prime factor in the formation of the student body. It is known as *repetitorno* (meaning repetition) and the name is very apt.

A university teaching staff member, usually holding a PhD, will make it known that he or she is willing to accept final year schoolchildren who are preparing for college entrance in a particular subject.

As a rule the tutor knows exactly the specific requirements of a given college, and in fact is usually a faculty member. Far from enlarging an aspiring student's knowledge, the private tutor relies on endless repetition and memorizing, geared to clearing the hurdle of the competitive entrance exam ahead – but not without a price.

Fees range from 5-10 roubles (about £5-10) per 45 minutes per pupil. A tutor of any standing will have at least two groups of pupils each studying one hour daily, six days a week – bringing in a minimum of 180 roubles a week, or slightly more than the average monthly Soviet wage.

Working upon such a base it is an easy step to tax-evasion and the development of what might be described as assembly line cramming courses.

The Soviet republic of Georgia, south of the Caucasus mountains, is known for its enterprising spirit, and so it was hardly surprising to read in *Evening Tbilisi*, published in the Georgian capital, of some examples of this very practice.

There was an instance of a private tutor "physically insulting" the taxman who came to his door to investigate irregularities. The severity of the insult is not recorded, but the phrase covers everything up to and including assault and battery, and it was not kept quiet.

After the tax inspectors' campaign, the 42 private tutors who were registered in Tbilisi last year were joined by a further 64, but these registered only "unwillingly".

Private tutors in Georgia are known to work with groups of as many as 50 pupils. The difficulty of keeping their activities quiet led to some using a car as a mobile classroom, or taking their pupils out into the woods for lessons.

The tax evasion, negligence and

Flying the flag at top of the school

CHINA

Flag-raising ceremonies are to be established in Chinese schools as part of an official drive to strengthen patriotic education.

A recent Ministry of Education circular emphasizes the "great importance in conducting propaganda and education on patriotism" for children and young people, and urges schools to "guide students to link their own fate and future with that of the motherland."

FEATURES

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FEATURES

NO PROBLEM

Susan Thomas looks at an attempt to get teachers and pupils to manage their own solutions

Professor Keith Jackson, creator and chief administrator of the Bulmershe-Comino Problem Solving Project is small and friendly which is just as well because his ideas, though showing bounding commonsense, could be profoundly threatening if they were not supported by so much warmth and encouragement.

For he believes that good teaching is good management: that children should be helped to identify and achieve their own goals using management systems and that this approach is applicable to every area of life.

During his time at Bulmershe College of HE, community workers, teachers, advisers and college administrators have all studied his approach and put it into practice. Now, in the fourth year of the project, he is able to spread himself a little, running seminars for interested groups.

I caught up with him at one in an Oxfordshire secondary school where he had been invited to speak by a group of the staff who want to improve their pupils' learning skills. It was their second session. Having discussed objective setting, self-knowledge, motivation and the need to give pupils a more active role in study, they had undertaken to ask their classes about their learning problems.

If this seems a very obvious way to start, it isn't. "You will find," said Keith Jackson, "that it is something the teachers have never done before. They will be very surprised by what they hear." He was right. The results were both

clearly unobtainable goals. So that if you are timid, overweight and unathletic, the top of the cliff may not be a reasonable objective; a point half way up may be more reasonable.

Then, said the climbers, "It is a question of discovering the spirit in which you are supposed to achieve the ascent; heroically with blood; gracefully; cheerfully with a twinkle in your eye; or co-operatively, with team spirit". In this way, both goal and problems became apparent.

The teachers had shown commendable self-knowledge, I felt. Their session began heroically with the revelations of their pupils' problems and progressed co-operatively towards devising techniques which would help the children to take notes more efficiently, receive and impart information, and be more creative.

"Plenty of the kids in my classes can be creative, they just don't want to be. We have to find ways of making creativity desirable," said a history teacher. "And" added a biologist "of making curiosity respectable."

Creativity, they decided, was the link between ingenuity and resourcefulness. Somewhere along the line from infant to upper secondary school, children lose their curiosity, resourcefulness and ingenuity. Or else they learn that it is not academically respectable. How then to give it back?

That was in to be the focus for another meeting. After two sessions with Keith Jackson, the group was so impressed by his approach to learning problems and life skills that they decided to form



Professor Keith Jackson

just because they'd signed on to come back into the sixth."

The staff were unaware of the children's anxieties too. They had not expected to find children who felt guilty simply because they had problems. . . . they thought they were letting themselves and their teachers down because they had difficulties. "They felt they should be able to be more positive about studying because all the rotten ones left last year."

There were, too, external pressures like the sheer physical difficulty of private study in a noisy form room and, more alarming, the fact that numbers of the older children "felt they'd never pass their retake because they had already been told, quite specifically, by other members of staff that they would fail."

As well as listening to their pupils, the staff had listened to themselves. "I realised what a bloody awful teacher I was . . . how boring . . . not teaching to achieve a particular result - and not getting one."

"I became aware of myself teaching - how much time I spend talking, how confusing the standard book is for someone who doesn't already know the work."

It is not hard to see why the professor needs to be encouraging. The group had reached stage two of the problem solving. The first involves deciding what result you hope to achieve. The second, identifying the problems which may prevent you from doing this, involves a certain amount of self-knowledge.

By way of encouragement and to show that the system is universally applicable, he told them about a group of gifted children, problem solving on an outdoor adventure course.

He said that last summer he and Ron Lewin, Berkshire advisor for science and technology, had run a course at Atlantic College, teaching the basics of problem solving - setting objectives, identifying and analysing the obstacles in their way, finding ways of dealing with them and monitoring both their progress and the quality of the result at the end of the exercise. They were then asked to apply to the course.

"The children were less than enthusiastic. But they came back after a day's rock climbing very pleased with themselves."

First, they had decided, everyone needed self-knowledge - there is little point in setting



Techniques that can be applied in all walks of life

a regular, weekly, problem-solving study group and asked him to come again.

This sort of response is common when teachers choose to examine their role in school, he says. Those who are preoccupied into doing so are less enthusiastic and less likely to last the course or practice the technique.

At present around 20 per cent of teachers are prepared to apply a logical system to their work. In time, and as the concept gains ground, he is confident that the percentage will increase. Others may be encouraged to hear that a high proportion of those who do, subsequently get promotion.

On the whole, primary schools still remain

child-orientated and less bound by subject timetable and exams, are more enthusiastic than the secondaries, says Keith Jackson.

He has spent much of his time at Bulmershe teaching problem solving technique to teachers and administrators in Berkshire and Hampshire. This has been extended to cover the whole country and involves infant, junior, secondary and further education teachers, students of education, the administrative section of Bulmershe College, community workers and advisors with a special interest in this field.

The results were encouraging. Teachers reported that their pupils got self-confidence and motivation while they were able to achieve the

and hitherto-unrecognized talents emerged from the most unexpected quarters. Adults have been heard to say that their whole life had been changed by applying problem solving techniques to everything from coping with 4X to reconciling school, work and the demands of elderly parents.

"The possibilities for developing social and linguistic skills are enormous," reports the Basingstoke Infant Group while Dr Harold Silver, principal of Bulmershe College, found that " . . . after several sessions with Keith Jackson I found myself thinking systematically in daily life and when crises occur I get to the heart of the problem very quickly."

This year the Comino Foundation extended the funding to allow the project to develop its work and disseminate the findings. An increasing number of groups - maths coordinators, FE teachers, probation officers, home help organisations and teachers of all ages and disciplines - have taken it up.

Perhaps the most exciting development is the opportunity to make it available to a majority of youngsters through the Youth Training Scheme core-curriculum, as suggested by the Mansell report.

If Keith Jackson is right, and he seems to have plenty of support, problems solving skills are an essential requirement for life. In theory, teachers should be good at both problem solving and getting results - in practice they often aren't.

Teacher education is to blame, he says. At college, student teachers are taught to set out aims and objectives and lesson plans. Once in the classroom these go by the board because they have not been shown to work. "How often" he asks "do you hear teachers say 'what shall we give them to keep them occupied on Wednesday afternoon?' - and how seldom 'what shall we do to achieve this result on Wednesday afternoon?'"

Teachers assume that traditional methods are enough. When they see that these aren't achieving the right results, they don't correct their teaching patterns. In other words" he says, "they are not extending managerial control over the learning system."

For all but the most woolly minded optimists, I would recommend *The Art of Problem Solving* available from Bulmershe College, £3.40. There is correspondence course, devised to solve the problem of releasing teachers from the classroom. All enquiries to: Bulmershe-Comino Problem Solving Project, Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Woodlands Avenue, Earley, Reading, Berks.

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Jack Cross visits a school determined to make relevant French lessons part of the core curriculum of every pupil
Photographs by Martin Mayer

Bill Spicer's third-year French lesson seems orthodox enough. The blackboard bears the heading "Le Vol", with little pictures, appropriately labelled, of a gun, mask, a bank doorway, and the past participles of several verbs. Boys and girls in turn make their contributions to a little story about a robbery - "J'ai mis un masque", "J'ai pris de l'argent", "J'ai quitté la banque", and so on. Some have their sentences off pat; others find the exercise more difficult. When, however, Simon struggles to produce the phrase, "J'ai rempli le sac", it produces neither exasperation in the class nor the smallest hesitation in the proceedings. On the face of it, it appears simply to be an example of efficient teaching technique, using lots of reinforcement, with a smallish group (23) of attentive and well-motivated pupils.

It is, in fact, a little more than that. For one thing, it is a totally mixed-ability class of youngsters who have been studying French since they entered Sheredes school and who expect to go on doing so to the end of the fifth year. In other comprehensives Simon might have been doing remedial English and most of the less able children offered only some kind of non-linguistic

As an APU occasional paper on Foreign Language Provision reveals, whether a child actually learns a language or not depends often on which stream or set he or she is placed in. Many spend their time studying (in English) life abroad, and sometimes a kind of linguistic survival course for tourists. In a significant number of schools, . . . background studies which co-ordinated no language content were sometimes introduced to lower ability pupils in their first or second years, a procedure apparently sanctioned by an HMI report which accepted that languages just don't suit all children.

At Sheredes they will have none of that. Formed 14 years ago, it remains committed to the notion of a common curriculum as promulgated by its first head, Maurice Holt. They try to put into practice the Hirst and Peters formula about the "forms of knowledge" which are the requirement and right of any educated person. Knowing how the people of another nation think and speak, they believe, comes into this category, so French is a core subject, though 1983-84 will be the first year to which it will be followed through by everyone to examination level.

As teachers will be quick to point out, it takes more than an idealistic philosophy and the will to make a curriculum work. The school has to be organized in a way that fits its chosen objectives. Sheredes has seven semi-autonomous faculties, whose heads organize the work in consultation with their colleagues within the parameters of a timetable agreed with the deputy head. A day blocked into four 70-minute periods gives ample opportunity for variety within a lesson and a lot of flexibility in deploying faculty staff.

The objectives to mixed-ability teaching in any subject are well-known. It doesn't, it is said, "stretch" the potential high-flyers; nor does it allow enough time to be given to look after the least able children. It requires a Super teacher to cope with its demands. For such reasons, with systems increasingly being rejected, science and language teachers leading the retreat. Neither Bill Spicer nor his faculty colleagues lay claim to Superman status but they do believe they have developed a team-based organization and teaching methodology which answer most of the objections.

They have certainly cultivated a coherent in-house style. Clive Hoare, taking a first-year class which had been studying the subject for less than eight weeks, also used pictures, of a mouse, a cat, a piece of cheese, a table and Papa watching a mouse. They too deployed a limited vocabulary (in the Present Tense) to make up a simple

little story - "Le chat regarde la souris . . . la souris mange le fromage . . . etc." He, too, re-rehearsed the material in a variety of ways, including question and answer - "Que fait la souris? . . . et puis?"

What was significant about both lessons was their implicit open-mindedness. All the pupils would continue by writing something like 20 sentences in their books, some of them for homework, but they would not be all the same. Some would be content to recapitulate the lesson as taught but others took it for granted that they were expected to develop the tale in their own way. One third-year boy had already written, "J'ai regardé l'argent et j'ai souri", others were asking how to say "Madame sat up in bed and shrieked" and what was the French for "I was thrown into jail". A little conspiracy was developing among first-year pupils to produce an ending in which the mouse, eating the cheese, got into a sandwich and was eaten by Papa. They'd had the same drills to produce precision and pace but were, according to their abilities and confidence, prepared to use them in individual ways.

Later, the material was to be developed into a story book, play or (in the case of the burglary) a objectives, which, in the words of the school's sophical deputy head, P Michalski-Upton, aim to make all the work "immediate, relevant, cultural, creative, applicable and expressive". He has an answer for the sceptics who ask what does the school do when it comes up against the cold reality of exams. "Our children take them in their stride; the school's record is better than that. Our county and national averages in this regard, is more testing, in the mixed-ability situation, is more demanding, intensive and rigorous than the conventional annual exams, which we don't have."

Bill Spicer, though conceding that the present third year were to a certain extent guinea-pigs, was confident that French would prove no exception to the general rule. The blocked timetable and team system made it simple and natural for groups to be bived off occasionally for specific training to meet the demands of O level or CSE - such targets are chosen by parents, pupils and teachers talking together. Many children, including all the least able ones, would take part in the graded assessment scheme which Hertfordshire, like many counties, is developing, particularly in modern languages.

He has some doubts about GCE though. Like many other language teachers he is very critical not so much of the O level content as of its marking scheme. "Take the comprehension passage, which counts for so much. Candidates have to read a pretty stiff piece of foreign prose. There are a set of questions, also in the examined language, which they have to understand and relate to sentences in the passage. They do all this for free. They only get marks for absolutely correct answers to the questions - a couple of incorrect verb endings or misplaced accents and they lose the lot. Even fluent speakers and readers miss out on this question." He hopes the new 16-plus exam will take a more liberal attitude; if not Sheredes may have to go for a Mode 3 O level. They're anxious at the school to make contact with others who are having to face the same problem.

At any rate, there's no way they will allow examination demands to stop them including French in a core curriculum designed to provide a genuine education for all pupils while creating opportunities for the more advanced ones to show their abilities.

Anyone interested in mixed ability language teaching can contact Bill Spicer at Sheredes School, Cook Lane, Huddersfield, Herts.



REVIEW

SHEER
VERVE

If *Pase doble*, by nineteen-year-old Eracles Aristidou, had been by one of Britain's best-known sculptors, it would undoubtedly have stood out for its sheer verve and accomplishment at the recent Hayward sculpture show. Eracles, however, is doing A level on the full-time arts and crafts course at Kingsway-Princeton College for Further Education, so the future of this exhilarating seven-foot piece is currently uncertain.

It began as a twelve-inch impetuous inspired by the enigmatic theme, "Fascinating Rhythms", the biggest problems he apparently encountered

were how to fit the hardboard and pine sculpture together and how to make it stand up. The process took ten days and represents, says his lecturer Debbie Usher, "a remarkable degree of craftsmanship realized despite minimal facilities".

Next term the sculpture, which is in bright primary colours, may acquire a backdrop (already designed). Any institution - or dance studio - which offered to exhibit it would be doing itself, quite as much as Eracles, a favour.

Michael Church



Photograph: Laurie Spurrman

Guess the news

Peter Mullen suggests that the current BBC style of news-presentation may be having subtly destructive effects

"Here is the News... that is the end of the News." Nowadays things are different and they are getting worse. In fact you might say that the BBC's new early-evening showpiece *Sixty Minutes* could be subtitled "Guess the News". First we have to strain to hear what is being said above the frenetic jangling of the signature tune. Why is it thought necessary to have words and music at the same time? Can't producers see that to have any other sounds competing with the words of news is to undermine the importance of the news itself? We are in the land of gimmicks here: everything has to be what those to the trade call "good television" - in other words it must be overloaded with as many slick changes and whirling captions as it is possible to cram into a minute's introduction.

Sixty Minutes is losing in the ratings war. Perhaps that might induce the BBC to wonder whether we want to have stuck before us a presenter who offers four or five thin slices of news about half a dozen different parts of the world, from the Middle East to Middlesbrough, all in less than thirty seconds, and who then hands us over to Harriet or Moira to start the whole operation over again, and who finally - in case we should labour under the delusion that what we have been hearing is the news - announces "But first, here is the news".

Sixty Minutes has only brought to final putrescence a trend which has been long practised on Radio Four. The idea is to keep the listener's attention, to stop him switching-off or switching-over. This can only mean that the BBC has an exceedingly low opinion of its listeners' attention-span. They will tell you that it is only a matter of style, of being casual, informal and generally lightened-up. But the trouble is that the current mania for ever-briefer summaries repeated two or three times inside five minutes and spiced by "regional comments" from innumerable "special reporters" introduces only a chaos of words in which nothing is communicated. The mind, if it is even engaged in the first place, soon becomes saturated and the information is not assimilated; it simply drains away.

There are aspects and varieties of information that cannot be conveyed in one-minute summaries, short sharp shocks of news that are ended as soon as they are begun. But the real damage goes



Presenting "Sixty Minutes"

much deeper, for, once people have got used to attending for only a few seconds at a time, they become unable to attend to anything longer. Thus the BBC's methods produce deprivation of understanding - a nice twist in Orwell's year for "communication" read "babel".

I have again and again asked pupils to mention one or two items "that were on the news this



Bernard Falk and Hugh Scully

morning". The result is usually an embarrassed silence or else a wild guess about some fallacy such as Cruise Missiles or Northern Ireland. Of course they remember *Breakfast Time's* astrologer; but then he gets longer to speculate about tomorrow's news than your average television journalist's time to report on today's.

It is the pervasiveness of broadcasting which has created the universal mode of listening. The

consequences for all kinds of teaching are both obvious and startling: how can young people be expected to listen to anything for any reasonable length of time when the ubiquitous medium of broadcasting is conditioning them to expect everything as "instant"? It is all made that much worse because there is no possibility of opting out. As conservationists have discovered in other areas, there is only one environment: that is why what the BBC (and ITV) does is crucial.

The Controller of Radio Four has even more ambitious aims for his network. He is worried because "more people switch off Radio Four in mid-morning than any other network". Hardly surprising, you might think, given the regular exaltation of mindless trivia in *Start the Week* or *Midweek* (because people are paid to talk) and the frequently inaudible telephone conversations on *Tuesday Call*. The Controller wants to turn this at present sectionalized jargon into something which he calls "a rollercoaster". This means simply the blurring of distinctions between beginnings, middles and endings of programmes and the adoption instead of something like the continuous homogeneous superficiality of Radios One and Two. Not exactly like them of course, because "the character of the network will be preserved". What character?

Relth's warning that to give people what it is imagined they want will soon result in their wanting what they are being given has come horribly true and the BBC is now responsible for a dissociation of sensibility on the grand scale. Events are juxtaposed without any thought of propriety, with no regard for what is incongruous, tasteless. I am no puritan but something has surely gone wrong when the hourly news summaries on Radios One and Two every day sound more like "Six people were killed in a house fire in Westchester - now here's Barry Manilow".

How can teachers hope to convey any sense of the wonder and subtlety of the world to pupils who are daily desensitized in this way? The BBC seeks to defend itself by talking about cheerfulness and informality but its news output is nothing of the kind - only coarse, indiscriminate, unsubtle, tactless and becoming more and more mindlessly the same.

The insidious trend to sameness is a sort of totalitarianism in the passive voice with all the dehumanizing which that implies. Well, what do you expect in 1984?

ARTS

Outside looking in

A Childhood
CA, Mondays, January 2, 9, 16 and 23.
9.00-10.00pm.

In a way, the title of Angela Pope's documentaries is a deliberate misnomer: seven children are featured in the four films and the homes in which they are living out the experiences of their childhood are quite dissimilar. But while experiences may differ widely, the experience of childhood itself is much the same wherever it is taken. It is a time, as writers on the subject remind us, when the emotions are more acute and the feelings more vivid, when the world is fresh and our vision of it unclouded. It is also a time characterized by a pervasive sense of impotence.

As adults, we may see our hopes for the future invested in our children, but their own hopes are usually a good deal more immediate and express their lack of any real power to influence their surroundings. "Wish they'd get back together again", John says of his separated parents; and when his sister Rebecca wonders if their mother will eventually marry her boyfriend, he mutters the urgent incantation "hope she don't, hope she don't". Shut your eyes and make a wish.

John and Rebecca live in Brixton, their father in Belfast. They enjoy a level of affluence below that which allows private telephones and the film centres on the children's efforts to set up a telephone call, via a Belfast neighbour, to a public coin box so that they can speak to their father. When, incredibly, the call comes through, they forget what they were meant to say. John was himself and the children dissolve into the uncontrollable giggles of those whose emotions are acute and whose vision of the world is unclouded.

Meanwhile, their mother is struggling to achieve the impossible: to keep a family of five children on social security, to give them the affection that



John and Rebecca

they need, to live a life of her own and to stop herself and the rest of them using bad language in front of the camera crew. For the moment, the children take her heroism for granted. If they had a television set that could get more than two channels, they might see this and reflect. That, I suppose, is the main justification for such fly-on-the-wall documentaries.

Angela Pope spent several weeks with each family before starting to film and the aim was to capture the truth rather than the factual reality of their lives. No one opens a front door and exclaims: "Hello, John... My God, who's that bloke with the camera?" But when the man calls from the LEB to cut off the electricity and agrees to leave it for 24 hours, John's mother thanks him with the authentic humility of someone content to know that she can get by for another day and grateful for it. How much anyone actually chooses to be filmed getting a reprieve from the LEB, is another matter.

Not all children are so photogenic as these or could behave so unself-consciously in front of the camera. The films are presented without comment, but the director is there to set up the telling scene. Rebecca and John, for example, staring through the church window at the choir practice of their black neighbours and not because they are Northern Irish living in Brixton, but because they are children, conveying that feeling of being on the outside looking in. The grown-up world is sometimes puzzling, even to grown-ups. Angie (January 16) and her friend Charmaine sit on a railway platform discussing men. Babies, they conclude, are a good thing and men, at best, a necessary evil. But perhaps the most telling comment on the adult world comes in the final film, as Gavin prepares for his common entrance exam. Under pressure from home and school, he wears the haunted look of someone condemned for a crime he didn't commit.

Robin Buss

Stage space

Studying Drama. By David Bradby, Philip Thomas and Kenneth Pickering.
Croom Helm £16.95. 0 7199 0650 1.

Studying Drama incorporates the combined wisdom of three dedicated practitioners of drama in education. It is a worthy, if dully written, book which will be welcomed by those teachers uncertain of their roles or of the new skills they are called upon to adopt "in departments that have their place within a faculty of arts or humanities". To the experienced the contents will be all too familiar.

However, the book "is intended primarily for undergraduates and A level students following courses in drama and theatre arts... The play in performance" is the subject of study, and the authors rightly warn "that prejudice against the study of drama as a performing art as opposed to a branch of literature has been, and to some extent remains, strong". The material is laid out in three parts dealing, in turn, with stage space, the art of the actor, and with contextual

issues affecting the playwright. Parts I and III suggest project work. Part II recommends physical and vocal exercises for the aspirant performer. Each section concludes with a useful bibliography.

The trouble with such books is that their authors write about a discipline which is quintessentially active. Drama and acting skills are ideally acquired in practical sessions under expert guidance. Similarly, body training is safest and best when conducted by movement experts who can ensure that students don't suffer physical strain or damage. The kinds of exercise here presented are surely better left to trained professionals. Which leaves the book's theoretical insights. They are not so much new as better presented.

The writers' admirable intentions are, ironically, undermined by the very nature of the discipline they seek to promote. Active advocacy is to be preferred. Still, if there must be books on the subject, this is among the best.

David Blewitt

Spinning and weaving

From Fleece to Fabric. By June R. Lewis.
Roben Hale £9.50. 0 7090 1218 7.

Spinning, dyeing and weaving have long been popular in America, where every large town now sports at least one thriving shop selling the tools of these trades. This reaction against technological sophistication has led to a corresponding fashion in Britain: books on these subjects now abound, some large and lavishly illustrated, others small, practical, and confined to diagrams and black and white photographs.

From *Fleece to Fabric* is a useful but notably unadventurous example of the latter kind: the inept drawings in the closing chapter, which illustrate a variety of possible garments, would put off any clothes-conscious reader, and the appendix and glossary are skimpy compared with those of other manuals.

Ms Lewis may be an authority on spinning and weaving, but her book does not compare well with those already available at a similar price.

Betty Tadman

Set text

En Attendant Godot.
Bac to Bac Theatre Company, French
Institute, December 8.

Beckett's play is one of the set books on the AEB French syllabus for June 1985, so this production is a well-timed addition to the repertoire of the Bac to Bac company whose work was described in *The TES* by E J Neather on October 28. To judge by reactions at the French Institute, it should go down well with its target audience of A level students, suitably prepared.

En Attendant Godot makes heavy demands on its two leading actors: not only are Vladimir and Estragon on stage throughout, they have to orchestrate the verbal and physical action that will hold our attention and pace the fragile reality of their existence in the void. For me, Jeremy Newell and Andrew Colley inclined towards over-emphasis: real life, which this allegory parallels, is played more in the middle registers and only occasionally rises to a shout or falls to a whisper. But for an audience that has studied the text piece-meal in class, too much is certainly better than too little and these performances, sustained and enthusiastic, will bring the play alive.

Practical rather than artistic considerations probably dictated that Hélène Ford should be chosen for the Boy (in a mini-skirt, which is disarmingly unapologetic), but casting Judy Tavanier as Pozzo was a splendid idea: the ambiguity of her sex and dress allows her to pass convincingly from brutal menace to whining affection. The most thankless part is Lucky's: he has to spend much of his time on stage in abject silence, apart from his lengthy parody of learned discourse which Martin Sorrell delivered with style.

This is a purposeful and athletic production: I feared for Estragon at one point. Newell and Colley may irritate some linguists (a pedantic lot, on the whole) with their rare peculiarities of pronunciation or rhythm, but real teachers and real students will hardly believe their luck at being able to see this lively and polished creation of a difficult text.

Going native

George Orwell.
BBC2, December 29 - January 4.

Orwell never wanted anything written about himself because "he was really such a scrupulous writer that he didn't want any distractions from his writing," suggested Bernard Crick, Orwell's biographer, in the first of this series of five programmes shown last night on BBC2 (which (following closely on the heels of BBC1's tribute to the author of 1984) will bridge the old year and the new). The series, produced by Nigel Williams, is presented in a style which the great novelist and journalist would surely have approved of. Apart from essential link pieces, the commentary, tracing Orwell's life and the development of his political ideas, is almost entirely in the author's own words, interspersed with recollections from those who knew him.

Last night's episode covered Orwell's life from his birth in India, where his father was a civil servant, to his emergence as a writer with the publication of his first book *Down and Out in London and Paris* in 1933. Born Eric Arthur Blair on June 25, 1903, Orwell chose as his pen-name the name of his favourite river (after discarding the rather more prosaic *nom de plume* of H. Lewis Allways, P. noms de plume of H. Lewis Allways). His first S. Burton and Kenneth Miles). His first tramp in London and as a waiter in Paris. He rewrote it five times before it was published by Oollanz. According to his former tailor, who checked out his orders for flannel trousers during this time, Orwell was never quite as down and out as he appeared to be, which supports the view that there is an element of fiction in his autobiography and an element of autobiography in his fiction.

The second in the series, shown tonight at 6.30pm on BBC2, retraces Orwell's steps in Wigan and Bamsley where he gathered information for his second book, *The Road to Wigan Pier*.



published in 1936. Orwell was commissioned by Oollanz to write an account of the lives of the unemployed in the Thirties and many of his descriptions of the "deadening effect of unemployment" sound equally applicable today. Quite a few Barnsley and Wigan families still remember Orwell. "Tall, thin, rather an unkempt mack and a dirty trilby hat", was the impression he left on one Wigan man.

In one of his obituaries, Orwell was described as "a writer who went native in his own country" but Malcolm Muggeridge said of him that "although he desperately tried to get inside the

Swan song

Nobody minds cardboard characters in Christmas shows as long as they tell good jokes and/or sing good songs. Unfortunately in *Swan* Esther at the Young Vic they do neither. Based on the Old Testament book of Esther, a tale of political intrigue and persecution, told in this version without completely in song the show is a somewhat lacklustre affair.

Unfortunately many of Nick Munns' and Edward Oliver's songs particularly in the first half seem more like show stoppers than show stoppers. It's only in some of the second half numbers that chinks of the required razzle dazzle shine through. In general, the music is either dull or derivative. Sam Kelly's Mordecai (looking strangely like Donald Pleasance in the beer commercials) is likeable enough and Amanda Rodman as the suspiciously evil-like wise queen Esther sings with force and style. In fact the singing, particularly the harmonizing, is the show's only real strong point.

What *Swan* Esther lacks is a sense of drama, even at the point of climax. The story should be dominated by the image of the gallows, from which the brave and wise Mordecai is saved in the nick of time by his dutiful ward, Esther. Yet the audience never sees so much as the strands of rope. Haman, who gets it in the neck in Mordecai's place, seems more wretched than wicked. How can you hiss someone you feel sorry for?

Swan Esther is director Frank Dunlop's swan song at the Young Vic. Unfortunately, it turns out to be no more than another seasonal turkey.

Nick Baker

Budding art historians might profitably invest £2.50 for one of the first publications to emerge under the new Flamingo paperback imprint: *The Letters of Vincent Van Gogh*, edited and introduced by Mark Roskill, are as illuminating of their author as were those of D. H. Lawrence.

Betka Zamoyska

Community spirit

Heather Neill samples some pantomimes

For the youngest children *Nogbad the Nog* and the *Fire Coke* makes suitable alternative to pantomime. The plot is convoluted and takes while to get going but the colourful characters and costumes are faithful to Oliver Postgate's and Peter Firmin's Northland originals. And beside *NogBad the Bad*, the dastardly power-seeking villain, lives in a tower infested with surprisingly animated toads. Needless to say, he gets his comeuppance, but there's plenty of surprise and humour on the way.

Centrality of the visual

Next week
James Bentley on O and
A level textbooks for
religious studies

Out of limbo

On daughter and I have, I hope, thrown down a callow of memories. It was good too to be in a cast whose career spanned some 60 years; and especially good to be working and playing along side teenagers, free of those colonial straits which linger even in the most informal of school situations.

What happens next? There is talk of small-scale village plays, of translating the resurrection of the town band (German and many years) into a definite Seaside Coming. Credit already has an arts focus, and many of the people in the show are looking eagerly towards that next year. I suspect, though, that the most far-reaching results may be less specific, expressed through individuals drawing deeply of a shared excitement.

Geoff Forster

Realms of gold

The title of Nicola Beauman's readable study is derived from Virginia Woolf's tribute to "a member of a very great profession which has, as yet, no title and very little recognition, although the labour of mill and factory is perhaps no more severe and the results of less benefit to the world. She lived at home". The sort of housewife she probably had in mind, cheerful, patient, conscientious, the mainstay of every well-ordered family, sought her reward for the week's chores in the local library where domestic literature

Recent investigations by social historians of what happened to women between the wars have drawn attention to the forgotten women who interpreted their experiences as through which. For a later generation, there is an autobiographical impulse to "think back through our mothers" in search of an explanation for the values and expectations and ideals with which we were brought up. Nicola Beauman portrays the repressive Nanny to whom the moulding of her mother's character was entrusted before she came to Britain from Germany in 1933. "knowing no one but the For-

"Would you say that you had ever been in love yet? Tick one of the following: Yes, No, Not sure." The answers given by fourth-formers to Jacqueline Sasby's questionnaire were usually inconclusive and sometimes dispiriting, though no more so than the other miscellaneous sources that she cites in her eclectic survey of *Romantic Love and Society* from Chretien de Troyes to Princess Diana.

Like Smith, David Thomson draws

Our records show that you will shortly reach age 70 and we should like to settle your burial grant, whether or not you intend to die then . . . Whether or not you are going to die, even if you have not yet made up your mind, it is very important in your own interests that you should complete and return the enclosed application form.

David Wright


Truth and error woven fine

He says his poetry derives a deal from unhappiness and thinks probably accounts for his popularity since (he suggests) most people are unhappy. His parents were "not good at being happy . . . and things rub off." (Heeze) "They're you up, your Mum and Dad!" His words on the poetry of Stevie Nicks are a fitting comment on his own. She speaks, he says, with "the airy, sadnesses."

One could discuss at length the sensitive and illuminating discussion of the work of Tezomyn, of Bateman, Ofwe and several others. These are indeed the core of the

Barjamen because he communicates without benefit of scholars' assumptions that his own work is equally accessible. He is wrong. He is better, more than (He) can be hated more complex. (He) will tell that "therefore!" He must know that poetry is taught, not learned in the O. University and I can tell Mr. La. that O.U. students found his poem to be no means pertinent. (I would not mind still find the symbolism of poem "Still Wind" teasing.)

So LaRkin is right to protest against bad teaching, but he protests too much, far too much for one who has critical writings in this volume much to teach us all. Moreover, the best teaching, his provokes thought and pleasure. He bucks up, does Larkine.



The Arts have had the excellent idea about painting and sculpture devised a beautifully designed batch of books. Three Little Books About Sculpture by an educational commentary. Available from Bristol Museum.

In theory

Craig's revolutionary theories, which he expresses with visionary fervour in his writings, centred on his belief that theatre is primarily a place for seeing - for "action, scene and voice" - and not for the hearing.

lucres between the conventionally minded and the visionary, these writings are persuasive and thought-provoking. The collection justifies Craig's inclusion in a series alongside Brecht and Meyerhold.

Lynne Truss

Elisabeth Henry

PAPERBACKS

Juvenal perhaps receives a fairer reappraisal, as "a poetic mind more original, imaginative and creative than any since Virgil. This verdict forgets Seneca; but it is right to approach Juvenal's Satires primarily as poems, equal - though we may want to say superior - to the tragedies in which in some respects stand half-between Virgilian and Juvenalian of language.

Mary Lefkowitz, in *The Lives of Greek Poets* (£5.95), examines surviving biographies and concludes that works of this kind in the ancient world were usually fictional, composed to suit the poet's own work. The biographies are supplied in translation in an Appendix.

Lucian by Christopher R. Wood (\$5.95) provides a straightforward account (The Man and the Work) followed by a wide-ranging survey of his later influence in European literature. "Dialogues of the dead" and fantastic voyages were the two favorite elements of Lucianic, but dramatic and prose writers from medieval times owed many other debts to him.

Philosophy enters this list
Antony Kennedy's *Aristotle's The*
the Will (\$5.95): austere and
Aristotle's distinction between
knowledge (eg speaking Greek
having it (eg being a Greek-spea
but currently using English), w
further category of "having an
having" (eg understanding Ger
being asleep) has a good deal to
teachers.

BOOKS

Between medieval and modern

State of the English Literature. By Murray Roston. Macmillan £12.00. 333 27143 2. £3.95. 27144 0.

Shakespeare's Language: An Introduction. By N F Blake. Macmillan £14.00. 333 28638 3. £3.95. 28639 1.

Shakespeare's Stories. Edited and introduced by Giles Gordon. Hamish Hamilton £7.95. 341 10879 9.

Murray Roston's is one of four volumes launching the Macmillan History of Literature, to be completed in 12 short books - this one has 235 pages - covering English literature from the Anglo-Saxons to today, with separate volumes on Scottish, Irish, Anglo-Irish, American, and Commonwealth writing. Historians, after long being frowned upon by the Leavisites, is coming into its own again as an important element in literary understanding and appreciation, and this history, with 12 splendid photographic reproductions in each volume, should serve admirably the needs of the non-specialist for general reference, studying for examinations up to university entrance, or reading for sheer pleasure.

Professor Roston wears his wide-ranging scholarship lightly, providing an overall unified and balanced concept of the whole literary field.

devoting most of his space to the major poets, dramatists and prose writers. Minor but still important figures are given brief treatment, but anything like a catalogue of names is scrupulously avoided. The whole volume appears to be free from obvious bias - except perhaps in its dismissive attitude to Shakespeare's late Romanesque, including the widely cherished *Tempest*!

Bias must not be confused, however, with strongly held and openly avowed convictions. Professor Roston is a self-proclaimed enthusiast for the new Renaissance humanism: for him everything that is best in the Elizabethan thought and life of the Elizabethan Age, owes its existence, directly or indirectly, to the impact of this important new element; and one must admit that this is a view shared by the majority of critics. But while no one would deny the effect of Renaissance thought on the century, it is important for the student to realize that the degree of its influence is still a matter of debate. CS Lewis in his *Oxford History* volume certainly does not agree with Professor Roston as the latter freely admits; and it is interesting to read the famous passage in *Hamlet*, "What a piece of work is man..." which opens, "This is not the medieval view..." with the treatment of the identical passage on the first page of *EMW*

Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* where he insists, and goes on to demonstrate why, that "Actually it is in the purest medieval tradition". Yet both are true. The *Hamlet* passage uses like a catalogue of names is scrupulously avoided. The whole volume appears to be free from obvious bias - except perhaps in its dismissive attitude to Shakespeare's late Romanesque, including the widely cherished *Tempest*!

The sixteenth century was an age of transition between the medieval and the modern. Everything was in a state of flux - even the language was continually changing and evolving. Professor Roston concedes this in his brilliant opening chapters, "The Dual Vision" and "In Search of a Poetic Style" though concluding, in support of his pro-Renaissance viewpoint, that "The search was less for new styles of thought". In contrast, Professor Blake's book is for those Shakespearean specialists for whom the general matter of the plays is already thoroughly familiar material, and who also are conversant with the principles of structural analysis and believe in the relevance of linguistics to the study of literary texts. "Language" here does not refer to imagery or other poetic devices but simply to Shakespearean functional, their meaning, grammatical function, and syntax wherever these differ from

present usage. The chaotic state of Elizabethan language in all its aspects is repeatedly stressed: no precise rules, no grammar books, even the parts of speech not settled, with Shakespeare, we are told (page 51) using "destruction" as a verb.

Shakespeare Stories, by "20 of our best writers (1)", inspired by or derived from Shakespeare, is, almost inevitably, a mixed bag: amusing ones by Salman Rushdie on Yorick, or Robert Nye's witty - and bawdy - "The Second Best Bed", thoughtfully interesting ones by Francis King and Ian Crichton, a powerful one on the identity of the Third Murderer in *Macbeth* by Fred Urquhart; a few undistinguished, a few "also-rens"; and, as the editor realized, one miniature masterpiece: Paul Ableman's account of a delicate, idealistic love relationship between Edgar and Cordelia, first mutually confessed only a few minutes before the ominous opening words of the play dramatically end the story. No reader will ever see *King Lear* in quite the same light again: a new, small dimension will have been added.

So - a bit of a publishing gimmick, but these stories make "a good read"; the light-weight except for Ableman's and perhaps Urquhart's and King's, but enjoyable, and attractively produced.

Hermann Peschmann

Great themes

Public and Private Man in Shakespeare. By James Gregson. Croom Helm £13.95. 0 7099 1124 6.

Shakespeare's Theatre. By Peter Thomson. Routledge & Kegan Paul £8.95. 0 7103 9480 0.

Much of *Public and Private Man in Shakespeare* is not new - after 300 years of Shakespeare criticism one would hardly expect it. Most of the conclusions, suggestions, perceptions have appeared elsewhere as is well recognized by the author himself. What is new is the ordering of the material to develop consistently what James Gregson considers the main themes of the great poet: the main conflict between the individual, private man and the public figure, and the corruption of power.

In *Richard II*, the poetic individual is vanquished by the calculating schemer who ultimately loses his private personality in his public persona, although, as James Gregson points out, it is the "loser" who holds and enralls the audience. The fallible Antony loses to the austere, Roman Octavius in his own inner, personal conflict: the public man who is destroyed by the lover of Cleopatra and who, nevertheless thereby gains heroic stature. The development of Prince Hal into Henry V is dealt with in not quite the usual way and Othello, successful public man, is shown as helplessly at the mercy of domestic problems - Iago being the instrument of discord and collapse in the sphere as much as the arch-villain that he certainly is in his own right - in the unfamiliar private life that his marriage has created for him. As would be expected in such a work, *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Macbeth* are studied in detail as are some of the even more difficult and controversial plays.

As Granville Barker has said, more than one mind is required to attempt the reconstruction of Shakespeare's theatre and stage and the degree to which these affected the plays themselves. So the fact that Professor Thomson is only one of many who have pored over the contemporary diaries, sketches and reports of the plays themselves and criticisms from the seventeenth century to the present day does not lessen the value of anything he writes. It is disappointing that realistic to have it pointed out that "this wooden O", the Globe Theatre, was more probably polygonal, the nature of wood and the character of practical carpentry being taken into account; but it is such practical common sense that characterizes Peter Thomson's approach to the plays and their staging.

When dealing with the playhouses themselves and exploring the evidence for scenery, inner and upper stages, the positioning of musicians, trapdoors, scenic effects and the nature and placing of the audiences, the author's style is clear and succinct and the material well-presented and of great interest. This is also true when he discusses the formation of the companies of actors. In particular the Men, and the influence of business interests on them, the playhouse and the plays themselves. True, too, of the chapter entitled "Macbeth: the 'tragic house'" where he studies the staging in detail as coped with by the property men and all those engaged backstage. However, the two chapters on *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet* are not so happily contrived, the author having allowed himself to stray from the path of practical stagecraft into discussing also the literary aspect of the plays which he does less well.

The notes and bibliographies are excellent and the three appendices well-chosen.

Juliet Heslewood has similar, though less severe, trouble with her *Julius Caesar* in *Julius Caesar*. The cabin boy Ian's cry of "I don't know nothing any more I don't, but I know there's something fishy going on up there!" in "The Kobold and the Pirate" falls comically short of the colour and vitality which it aims. The 20 stories, drawn from all over the world, are retold in a workmanlike but uninspired prose culled, like Abranson's, by pictures, especially the pencil drawings, which communicate a real sense of surging excitement.

Both these books will give pleasure. But they both lack the rough intimacy of the storyteller who trusts his tale and knows his audience; all their hesitations and awkwardnesses stem from uncertainty of tone. They are both divided; Abranson between the fascinating book he could write and the formula book he tried to write, and Heslewood between her conflicting desires for variety of material but uniformity of approach.

Neil Philip

Katya Walter

Old and new approaches to chemistry

Introduction to Physical Chemistry. By G I Brown. Longman £5.95. 582 35365 3.

Comprehensive Chemistry. By J Hicks. Macmillan £6.95. 0 333 33154 0.

Organic Chemistry. By C B Hunt and A K Houlden. Butterworths. 0 408 70915 4.

Over the last 10 years, most Advanced level examination syllabuses have been modified, placing greater emphasis on principle and concept, less on rote learning; a trend reflected in most modern textbooks. It is therefore a salutary experience to evaluate two traditional textbooks (Brown and Hicks) which have sold steadily throughout the last 20 years, and a further book that relies, in the author's words, on the "tried and trusted" style.

There is much to praise in this approach. The descriptive material is skilfully skimped, in modern books is well treated, especially so in organic chemistry area. Each book contains the principles, concepts and fundamental ideas but they are integrated into the text - in all the impression is more inviting and pleasing than the previous edition. The written style is a little formal still, although it is clear and to the point. There are a vast number of questions, well over 700, but many are little more than academic or technical exercises, requiring substitution into equations. Few require genuine thought or relate the topic to wider aspects of the subject, ie industrial or the environment. It would have been helpful if a wider variety of

Brown's *Physical Chemistry*, now in its third edition has undergone extensive revision. The aims are as they were 20 years ago, to produce an A level text suitable for most exam

syllabuses, to arouse interest in the subject and to avoid a too mathematical approach. The revision was necessary to match the text to the content of new examinations, while retaining a balanced and complete picture of the subject.

Topics which have declined in importance, such as transport numbers and phase rule, have been omitted, or drastically cut, while spectroscopy and very fast reactions, for example, are now included. Other areas have been updated, hybridization and delocalization are now thoroughly discussed, and the determination of the relative molecular mass of volatile liquids is described using the gas syringe method rather than Victor Meyer or Dumas method. The calculation for this practical is based on the molar gas volume, rather than using the more fundamental general gas equation favoured by most modern books and exam boards.

The text is well set out, headings are clear, the sequence logical, a generous number of diagrams are included, and the mathematics are well integrated into the text - in all the impression is more inviting and pleasing than the previous edition. The written style is a little formal still, although it is clear and to the point. There are a vast number of questions, well over 700, but many are little more than academic or technical exercises, requiring substitution into equations. Few require genuine thought or relate the topic to wider aspects of the subject, ie industrial or the environment. It would have been helpful if a wider variety of

question style were included, structured questions, comprehension exercises or objective tests for example. If you liked the early editions, you will undoubtedly warm to this book - it retains the strengths of the original but is now more modern and "in line" with current examinations. It stands as a traditional alternative to recent texts such as Liptrout and Atkins.

Comprehensive Chemistry is also a 20-year-old veteran, now in its third edition. Ten years ago it was revised, modernizing the units, but this edition contains no major change other than the addition of an excellent chapter on environmental chemistry, a topic which was probably the most serious omission from previous volumes. The author surveys the impact of various chemicals on the environment, concentrating on pollution of the atmosphere and hydrosphere, discussing in detail problems associated with sewage, lead, asbestos, pesticides, oil, and mercury. Graphic examples are given of how the problems are caused, how the pollutants are transported, the effects they can have, and how such problems are being dealt with.

It is a reliable source, but there is too little importance paid to the application of principle and basic concept. In the chapters on organic chemistry, a catalogue of reactions is given, whereas there are basic principles which can be used to rationalize information: the interconversion of acid derivatives, or comparison of hydrolysis of halogeno-compounds spring to mind. Some of the factual material is a little dated, the use of quartz in watches is not mentioned under silicon

dioxide, and topics important for examination are sometimes omitted - the explanation for the relative ease of hydrolysis of tetrachloromethane and silicon tetrachloride, for example. The revision should also have been used to update the rather old fashioned nomenclature, cuprous oxide and ethylene dichloride are typical, in the same way that units have been modernized. There is a brief appendix which outlines modern nomenclature in little over one side. A chapter on organic mechanism is included at the end of the descriptive chemistry of organic compounds, rather than being integrated with the relevant functional group chapter. Over 300 questions are given at the end of the book, all questions being taken from A level papers, but again there is an emphasis on calculation and essay-style questions.

The style is formal, and possibly a little too demanding for the riverside market. The book has a slightly indigestible feel, although this is perhaps inevitable with 900 pages of close print in a small format. However, it is factually sound, covers almost all syllabuses (and more - arsenic and antimony are still included) and the price is reasonable.

Organic Chemistry is part of a new three volume series of A level texts. It presumably replaces Wool and Linstead, one of the recommended texts (two decades ago, but although it shares some of the hallmarks of its predecessor - clarity, sound organization, pleasing style - it is a totally new book, with a more modern emphasis, and containing many additional chapters

on areas of current interest, notably structure and bonding, mechanism, and large molecules. The authors have adopted a traditional approach, using clear concise explanation of essential concepts, detailed description with full conditions for each reaction, a point often missed out in more modern texts.

Aliphatic and aromatic chemistry are separated. The authors argue that this approach allows automatic chemistry to be used as a revision topic and avoids unnecessary complication for the less able. Great emphasis is placed on the classification of reaction types, with mechanism being discussed at the end of each section, so that it acts as a rationalizing tool rather than as a predictor. This balance between description and principle is one of the great strengths. Practical details are not given, and supplementary details are required, although chapters on purification and structure are given at the end of the book.

Each chapter begins by discussing physical data, and proceeds to cover preparations and reactions. Distinguishing tests are thoroughly discussed and a summary is provided, often in the form of a flow chart. At the end of each chapter are brief questions, but a large range of recent A level questions are given as an appendix.

In all this is a most recommendable text, showing an impressive command of the material between traditional and modern approaches, and being entirely suitable for any type of course.

Chris and Pat Mason

Learn with the children

The Teaching of Primary Science: Policy and Practice. By Derek Holtford. The Falmer Press Curriculum Series £6.50 and £11.95.

Practical Primary Science: A Source Book for Teachers. By Ramola Shewell. Ward Lock Educational £3.95.

The *Teaching of Primary Science* is one of a series under the generic title of a Curriculum Series for Teachers, and a glance at other titles suggests that some are concerned more directly with curriculum planning in the classroom, others with a more general overview of what has happened and is happening in a particular curriculum area. This book falls into the latter category, and the editors suggest in their introduction that it is suitable for pre-service students as part of their background knowledge, and for practising teachers with career ambitions as an aid to deepening and sharpening their perspective on the primary curriculum in general and the science area in particular. This intention is pretty well reflected in the selection of articles forming this reader.

It opens with a typically pungent and thought-provoking introduction by Colin Richards in which he makes out a case for science to illustrate a general exposition of some key issues in the primary curriculum. (One suspects that he could have done equally well with any other area.)

One such issue is that of process versus content, a particularly knotty one as far as science in the primary school is concerned. A number of the articles contribute to this debate, some more directly than others. Those by Wynne Harlen and Gerry McClelland are significant in discussing the way the pendulum has swung somewhat away from the post-Plowden orthodoxy that placed little, if any value on the content. Ann Squire has some useful things to say on this, as do those contributing to the section entitled "Practice".

Theories of children's learning having particular reference to science are addressed in two excellent articles. The first, by Nathan Isaacs, remains a seminal statement even though it was made over 20 years ago, and Gerry McClelland's contribution is exemplary in deriving practice from well grounded theory.

No book of this kind would be

complete without some appraisal of at least the major curriculum movements and have very helpful commentaries and evaluations on the Oxford Primary School Project, Nuffield Junior (and Combined) Science, Science 5-13, and Children Learning through Science - all written in authoritative style and often by those who were directly concerned as directors or team members, and representing a very valuable and concise source of comparative material.

As one must expect in a reader, the quality of the writing varies, but on the whole it is readable and interesting. Peter Evans's article, in which he erects a powerful and persuasive case for the teaching of applied as well as (or is it instead of?) pure science to primary children, is memorable not only for its content, but especially for the forthright and sardonic style in which it is couched. Here is a head-teacher who knows his own mind and states his views in a most refreshing way.

This is a substantial book, containing 25 articles drawn from a number of sources including the DES and the TES, but most significantly from *Education 3-13*. In trying to assess a publication of this sort, one should ask whether it fulfils a need. In the field of primary science there is not only a considerable and growing literature (and the annotated bibliography compiled by Robert England is a very helpful final section), but a clearly felt anxiety in the schools, so that the arrival on the scene of a fair, well rounded and informed picture of the present state of things is timely. Further criteria of judgment particularly relevant to a reader are whether the intended or implied structure is read or merely contrived, and whether it succeeds in producing coherence out of a group of diverse contributions. I think it is right to congratulate Colin Richards and Derek Holtford on the nifty way in which they have marshalled and arranged these to produce a book deserving of a prominent place on the curriculum development shelves.

Ramola Shewell makes the most modest claims for her book, *Practical Primary Science*. It is intended, she states, "for any primary teacher who wants some ideas for starting science". As a director of a busy teachers' centre she is well placed to know what the customers want, and no doubt much of

the material for her book is based on what she has seen in the classroom. It is reminiscent of the stories which she writes in the introduction to "Traditionally science in primary schools has been divided into biology, chemistry and physics. For primary children, however, these divisions are too structured". One wonders where the teachers she is addressing have been all these years. Have they not encountered Plowden, the 1978 Primary Survey, or The School Curriculum of 1981?

There is no attempt in this book to justify the teaching of science to primary children. The selection of content is presented in a way which has no reference to an overarching conceptual framework related to some notion about children's intellectual development. This is not to say that the content is anything but sound. Each topic is presented in a matter-of-fact way, using a consistent framework: the topic is introduced, followed by General Notes, Activities and Experiments, Developments, Links, and comments with Resources and Support material. In other words, a straightforward, eminently practical book, as its title suggests.

Ramola Shewell is an enthusiast and wants to encourage others to "have a go", and to "learn with the children". There is an uncomfortable assumption that you can teach science with little or no background knowledge, so long as you have access to some "off the peg" topics that have been selected and structured for you in books such as this. Perhaps her own knowledge and experience lead her to this view, but the fact that you really need to understand your material thoroughly if you are to teach it successfully. (Has anyone suggested we should "learn with the children" in mathematics, or in language?) Even taking one of her own topics, "Living in Water", one is soon confronted with what to the uninitiated would be a confusing variety of species, such as Filamentous algae, Paramecium, and Coelenterates. Could a teacher with no training in biology cope with a topic like this?

The intention is good and, as I have said, the content is in itself sound. That a need for this sort of thing exists is certainly the case, and it should sell like hot cakes.

Philip Hyth

Lynne Marjoram

R C Vernon

lingo

Words may not hurt as much as sticks and stones, but their wounds may go deeper and last longer. So all dictionaries that enter words like *wog*, *yid*, and indeed *papsi*, label them as slang. Yet no dictionary labels *wog* or *yid* as slang. With *papsi*, *wog*, and *yid*, society (says its dictionaries) dis-

approve the insults they receive? The words *dikdadye*, *wancy*, *pansy*, and *queer* are "derogatory" in the *Longman New Universal Dictionary*, but not in the *Concise Oxford*, *Collins English*, or *Chambers 20th Century*. So for *Longman*, *pansy* is like *wog*, whereas for the other dictionaries, *queer* is like *ing*.

Moreover, words can offend unintentionally. When an adult woman is called a *girl* - so that mixed doubles are played by *women* and *girls* - are women offended? Not according to any British dictionary. But in America the latest Merriam-Webster *Collegiate Dictionary* says it's "sometimes taken to be offensive". A British-American difference? Or a British lexicographic oversight?

Sex, sexuality, race, and religion - these are not the only areas where words can hurt. People who like the Merriam-Webster treatment of *girl* may well ask, to take but one example, whether any dictionary will ever label *mingol* - a word that, however innocently used, may offend both people with Down's syndrome and lipshirts of Mongolia. After all, lexicography is, in part, knowing when to say *your* sorry.

Robert Ilson

The Economics of Education. By Brian Atkinson. Hodder & Stoughton £5.95. 0 340 33729 X.

As the cuts continue, a new book raises timely questions about where money for education comes from and how it is spent. Brian Atkinson, who is senior lecturer in economics at Preston Polytechnic, discusses whether education can be evaluated in terms of cost-effectiveness (are there, for instance, ideal sizes for classes, and schools?) and considers possible Government policies, such as voucher schemes and student loans. He also looks at the changing sources of decision-making and the growing fears of a central government takeover.

Biddy Passmore



Don Charlwood's *The Long Farwell* (Penguin £4.95) is an illustrated account of the settlers' voyages to Australia in the mid-nineteenth century. Abundant eye-witness stories lend vividness to the narrative. Above, life in the steerage area.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Setting sail

Stories of the Sea. By Erik C. Abranson. Illustrated by Edward Mortelmans. Hodder and Stoughton £4.95. 0 340 27137 X.

Tales of Sea and Shore. By Juliet Heslewood. Illustrated by Karen Barry. Oxford University Press £6.95. 0 19 278105 7.

Seafarers' yarns provide a rich body of story, anecdote and legend, on which

Erik Abranson has drawn to construct a celebration of the days of the "tall ships". Abranson is an enthusiast, and his own pleasure in his subject overrides his flaws of presentation. An uneven text is helped, too, by Edward Mortelmans' evocative and dramatic full-colour pictures.

The book is a series of narratives - some famous, such as the story of the Mary Celeste, others less-known, such as the tales of lost ships found years later encased in ice, their crews dead and the log book recording their fate - which provide pegs for Abranson's personal commentary on the life and lore of the sea. He is not really interested in their stories in themselves, and his book is best when he speaks from his own experience. Elsewhere - for instance, in the Mary Celeste chapter - the sail lang evapourates. Where he does try to bring the tales to life, his writing, which can be loose and companionable, seizes up. His historical digression is particularly lamentable: "Cut that talk, man, and pick thyself up!" Jennings retorted somewhat too quickly, "or despatch thee a punier". Abranson's book has many attractive qualities; it is a shame

no editor thought to tell him "cut that talk".

Juliet Heslewood has similar, though less severe, trouble with her *Julius Caesar* in *Julius Caesar*. The cabin boy Ian's cry of "I don't know nothing any more I don't, but I know there's something fishy going on up there!" in "The Kobold and the Pirate" falls comically short of the colour and vitality which it aims. The 20 stories, drawn from all over the world, are retold in a workmanlike but uninspired prose culled, like Abranson's, by pictures, especially the pencil drawings, which communicate a real sense of surging excitement.

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Neil Philip

Katya Walter

SCIENCE BOOKS

Physics for Scots

Higher Physics. By Jim Jardine. Heinemann Educational Books £5.50. 0 435 68221 0.

Essentials of Higher Physics. By Mary Webster. Heinemann Educational Books £4.95. 0 435 68336 7.

Higher Physics is the latest in a long line of superb pupil texts by this well-known author. It is essentially a revised version of his *Nat Phil 5*, updated to enter the new Higher Grade physics syllabus and, in its style, follows the same winning formula as its predecessors. The text is clear and easy to read with excellent, and at times humorous, diagrams and drawings and many interesting and topical photographs, some of which are in colour. These include pictures of the lift-off of the Space Shuttle and of the comet, Kohoutek, taken from Skylab. Key words in the body of the text are in heavy type and key formulae clearly stand out and are encircled for emphasis. Throughout the text, worked examples are provided in appropriate points, and at the end of each chapter making up each of the four sections of the book, a number of carefully selected problems of varying difficulty is supplied. These include SCEEB questions to 1982.

In content, the book is divided into four sections corresponding to N, O, P and Q of the new syllabus (no section R) and follows the published order of it. It makes the assumption that the user is already familiar with the first two cycles of the Scottish physics syllabus. Much of the content is similar to *Nat Phil 5* but there is much that is

different and there has been a re-organization of material to accommodate the new syllabus. We thus have Section N: Mechanics; Section O: Electricity; Section P: Optics and Radiation and Section Q: Models, Atomic and Nuclear Models. As required for the new syllabus, there has been a much greater emphasis on the applications of physics and there is a good introduction to the theory of errors in the first chapter. The material covers all of the published specific objectives including those which may not have been over-stressed in the past (eg unbalanced current in a Wheatstone Bridge). At the end of each chapter, there is a succinct review including relevant revision material from the second cycle.

With regard to practical work, key experiments stand out on a pink background and discuss use of the most up-to-date resources - eg micro-computer or microprocessor as an oscilloscope. The greater emphasis on language across the curriculum and on practical investigations and reporting thereof find expression in what Jardine calls the "team investigation" and one or more of those is included at the end of each chapter.

There is no mention of section R dealing exclusively with applications of physics and for which Memoranda have been produced for the first seven topics to be examined in 1984. Those topics to be examined have been a little disappointing, with one or possibly two exceptions which are in an immediately usable form for teachers and pupils. The treatment of those topics would have greatly benefited from Jardine's

style and lucid exposition and it is to be hoped that he will include them in later editions of this excellent work.

Mary Webster has chosen her title well - essentials only are supplied in her book. Unlike *Higher Physics*, it is not so much a background or reference text as a good set of pupil notes for revision purposes. First published in 1978 for the old syllabus, this new 1983 edition does not seem to have been updated for the new syllabus. Topics such as the manometer (page 128), mechanical oscillations (page 132) and radio communication (page 150) are now not "essential" (although possibly of some use in Section R) so rendering her title less relevant.

Unlike Jardine's *Mrs Webster's* book includes the O Grade material needed for H Grade work and, without it, would be a much slimmer volume. She does this by such devices as integrating the study of Heat, to the specific and latent heat and the gas laws, normally covered in the O cycle, with Kinetic Theory in the chapter on Properties of Matter.

The book is, however, thoroughly written with many worked examples in the text and further problems at the end of each chapter. There is, in addition, an exercise section of over 100 problems at the end. Answers are supplied for all of those but no SCEEB questions are supplied. Throughout the book, important facts or formulae are boxed-in for emphasis.

This is an excellent text, and will, by its very "set of notes" nature, appeal to many teachers.

Walter J MacCulloch



The caterpillar of the Emperor Gum Moth from Australia. Oxford Scientific Films have produced photographs to their usual standard to tell *The Silkworm Story* (Deutsch £2.99)

Into the blue

The Space Shuttle Action Book. By Tom Stimpson, Vic Duppia-Whyte and Patrick Moore. Aurum Press £5.95 906053 36 6.

Moongquake. By Roy Bentley. Deutsch £4.95 223 97533 0.

The Young Astronomer. By Sheila Snowden. Usborne £3.95 086020 6521 and £1.99 86020 6513.

The present batch of three astronomy and space books aimed at readers in the age group from about 8 to 12 offers two unconventional approaches and one traditional, proven technique. The most exciting is *The Space Shuttle Action Book*, one of the current batch of "pop up" books. Although his name appears on the front of the book, Patrick Moore will not mind me pointing out that it is not his work.

Accompanying the superb "paper engineering" of Vic Duppia-Whyte and the artwork of Tom Stimpson, the result is a book which contains enough drama and action to appeal to the youngest members of the intended age group, plus enough scientific accuracy to please the most well-informed 12-year-old.

It is highly unlikely that any of the young readers will actually learn anything directly from the book, but it brings to life things that they have read about elsewhere, or seen on television. Essentially, it is a fun book and deserves to sell hugely in that context. But it could also be a very useful classroom aid for any discussion about current developments in manned space flight.

Roy Bentley's approach is to slip "real" science into the reader's consciousness (or subconscious) in the guise of fiction. *Moongquake* has a little more text than *The Space Shuttle Action Book*, but not much. Most of

each page is taken up by colourful illustrations related to the simple adventure story about four space cadets involved in the lunar equivalent of an earthquake. The text is banal and not particularly accurate - there is no evidence that the moon does experience this sort of seismic disruption. But my seven-year-old son thought it was "really good", as much for the pictures as the "wonder" of the 11-year-old said it was "boring".

A reasonably able class of 10-year-olds ought to be able to produce something just as good for themselves, perhaps as a wall strip, and I can see why anyone would want to spend £4.95 on this book.

I can, however, envisage a lot of people laying out £1.99 for the latest Usborne paperback, *The Young Astronomer*. Like books about astronomy, it seems to be published every few weeks, and they all seem to sell. There must be a lot of people out there looking at the night sky with binoculars or telescopes - especially in the clear nights of autumn and winter - and Usborne's variation on the theme is as good a guide as any for the complete beginner. It starts from such practicalities as the need for warm clothing and a hot drink, provides star charts and an explanation of why the constellations move across the sky, describes the nature and evolution of stars and planets, and points the young reader in the right direction to follow this hobby seriously.

In terms of value for money, then, the traditional approach wins hands down. In terms of an exciting and probably short-lived toy, the pop up book of the shuttle scores handsomely as the focus for seasonal approaches. But *Moongquake* shows that just because an approach is new, it doesn't mean that it is good.

John Gribbin

Question tests

Objective Questions: Physics. By Michael Shepherd. Charles Letts Books £2.25. 85097 575 1.

A book of revision questions for O level and CSE physics which contains nearly 500 questions and answers represents very good value at the price. The text is attractively presented in an A4 format, with plentiful diagrams, frequently improved by the use of a second colour. The book is intended for use in systematic revision in conjunction with the same author's *Revised Physics*, which is divided into the same 28 topics.

Dr. Shepherd provides a valuable preface to help students get maximum benefit from the book. There is a clear summary of the types of multiple choice and other questions employed by the different examining bodies, and a list of the boards' addresses. Pupils will also be pleased to find not only numerical answers but single sentence answers to short answer questions. Fortunately there are errors, both in

spelling (schlerotic, scalar) and in answers to questions. For example, a propeller viewed through a stroboscope will be seen as a cross not a star (Q 17.2); a magnet can be erected by placing a magnetic material in a coil carrying a.c. (Q 22.2); the charge on an electroscope leaf is incorrectly given as negative (Q 23.8); resistance does depend on the diameter of the material of the wire (Q 24.13).

Occasionally the terseness of one sentence answers misleads: the centripetal force on the Moon as it orbits the Earth is provided by gravitational attraction, but it would be more helpful to add that this is the attraction between the Moon and the Earth, which some students would not deduce from the answer in the book.

These small faults do not significantly detract from the value of this new book. It is an excellent revision aid and can be recommended to any pupil prepared to devote a reasonable time to examination preparation.

M. D. Joyce

Wider horizons

Chemistry for Colleges and Schools. By D. A. Robinson and J. M. Wollard. Macmillan £8.95. 0 333 26192 5.

Basic Physical Chemistry. By W. J. Moore. Prentice-Hall £10.95. 13 057703 0.

Physical Chemistry. By F. N. Levine. McGraw-Hill £27.75. 0 07 037421 X. £9.50 07056 388 2.

Most educationists choose a textbook that reflects or complements their teaching, matching the depth of treatment to the demands of the syllabus. Occasionally, students of real ability at A level require greater depth of understanding, or more detail, or ask a particularly perceptive question. Each of the following books although geared to a "higher level" may well prove invaluable in such a situation, either to be read in part by the student, under the direction of the teacher, or perhaps to allow the tutor a greater depth of understanding that can be passed on in turn to the student.

Robinson and Wollard have produced a textbook covering the whole of chemistry at an introductory level for colleges, although it has much relevance and interest for A level courses. The authors aim to produce a concise, simply-written text covering as broad a range of material as possible, but successfully avoiding the common pitfall of a superficial treatment of organic chemistry, of overemphasis on mathematical aspects of the subject, and of covering the material in such depth that a large tomo full of daunting and difficult vocabulary is produced. There is no doubt that the authors have succeeded in their aim and have produced a most lively and challenging textbook.

Inevitably the text is broken up into the three traditional areas. Physical chemistry uses thermodynamics, equilibrium and kinetics as unifying topics, providing a framework and linking all the other sections together. The depth of treatment of some topics is considerably above A level, but the authors are skilled in presenting topics such as wave mechanics, molecular orbital theory, and quantum mechanics in a way that is both accessible and not too daunting. The more traditional areas of physical chemistry are also clearly explained; this area is probably the greatest strength of the book.

Inorganic chemistry covers periodicity s-block etc but the p-block is dealt with in one chapter. This has the advantage that general principles and trends are clearly explained but inevitably such an approach lacks the detail required for A level, the oxidizing power and thermal decomposition of lead (IV) oxide is not mentioned for example. Such criticism perhaps misses the point of the authors' philosophy, since it provides a well thought out alternative to the discriptive approach adopted by many books.

In flight

How Birds Work. By Ron Freethy. Blandford £8.95. 0 7137 11566 6.

Ron Freethy, a biology teacher and ornithological lecturer, has added personal style and relevant examples to an impressive amount of zoological fact. Not that *How Birds Work* is a massive tome; on the contrary, it is entirely manageable and readable.

The 12 chapters commence with evolution and classification. Obviously, the latter has required much judicious pruning, but there is enough to convey some understanding of the features used to distinguish the orders and important families. A comprehensive bibliography is included at the end. Anatomy and flight have also attained chapter status, while compre-

hensive physiological information on, for example breathing, respiration, feeding, nutrition and the special senses, is also provided. A discussion of migration and behaviour is virtually essential in any book of this kind, though to cover all aspects would be inappropriate. There is, however, enough to wet one's appetite and provide an introduction to these important areas. Mr Freethy has limited the use of technical language and included relevant background information which will help his audience to comprehend some of the more complicated ideas.

This is a well-illustrated little volume which certainly qualifies for inclusion in the senior section of the school library. Keen lay birdwatchers, who don't have specialized knowledge of the subjects covered, should also find it worth reading.

Peter J Baron

Although the authors state it is aimed at A level, there is too much detail omitted for this to be considered a standard text, but where more advanced and sophisticated ideas are required, for Oxbridge students, or to stimulate a teacher, this book will prove to be invaluable. I would anticipate a ready market overseas and in UK at college.

Walter Moore will be known to many chemistry teachers from their undergraduate days, as his *Physical Chemistry* was one of the standard texts in the fifties and sixties. *Basic Physical Chemistry* is in the same mould, although it appears to be aimed at the overseas university system, where it is directed towards science and engineering students who need a basic foundation in physical chemistry for a one year course. The text proceeds from considerations of internal motions to molecules and their energy states to thermodynamics, with sections on equilibria, rates, electrochemistry, bonding and spectra for example. The treatment is rigorous with an emphasis on mathematics, but the text is lively, inviting, relevant and very clear with many analogies for clarification. Diagrams are clear, sample calculations are included, the presentation is clear and material well structured. This will be a useful reference for teachers at school and college, who need to update their knowledge, or who need refreshing on some detail. It will undoubtedly be invaluable material for the FE and HE sectors.

Ira Levine's text covers the same ground. It is aimed specifically at the American undergraduate market, and places great emphasis on clarity, accuracy and depth. The presentation is certainly easy to follow, explaining depth understanding of all aspects of the subject. Each chapter has a useful summary, a generous number of worked examples, and short, easy to follow sections. Peripheral material is relegated to small print, so as not to interrupt the flow. Now topics, such as photoelectron spectroscopy, ion cyclotron resonance and field ion microscopy are included explanation, its rigour and its relevance, particularly in view of the biological example it gives.

Each of these degree level texts will prove to be stimulating reading. It is all too easy for teachers to limit their horizon at A level, yet these texts will throw their teaching into sharp relief.

Chris and Pat Mason

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M. D. Joyce

Revision

Graded Examples for O Level Physics 3rd edition. By C. B. Folland. John Murray £1.60. 0 7195 4087 9.

A third edition of this popular booklet contains over 350 numerical questions designed to cover the various O level syllabuses, including revisions since 1976. For the student using this book on his own each of the forty subsections starts with one or two worked

SCIENCE BOOKS

Star-gazing

Patrick Moore's History of Astronomy. By Patrick Moore. Macdonald £14.95.

The New Solar System (second edition). Edited by J. K. Beatty, B. O'Leary, A. Chalkin. Cambridge University Press £12.50.

The New Astronomy. By Nigel Henbest and Michael Marten. Cambridge University Press £12.50.

The old and the new astronomy are well represented in this batch of large format, well illustrated and modestly priced books. But only one of them touches on the newest and most exciting astronomy of today, the others are both historians of astronomy. Patrick Moore's version itself has a long history. Back in 1961, Moore produced a book called *Astronomy*. It went through several revisions and into *The Story of Astronomy* in 1972. Now, revised extensively yet again, it appears with the author's name not merely above the title but as part of the title.

This is not just a sign of the growth of Patrick Moore's own audience, but an accurate indication of the contents. This is what we might call "Patrick Moore astronomy", the traditional astronomy of telescopes, constellations, stars and planets. The discussion of galaxies is slight, and cosmology gets no more than a dutiful summary of the Big Bang theory and a mention of the Steady State hypothesis. Slightly surprisingly, however, Moore seems to be quite taken with the idea, recently put forward by Victor Clube and Bill Napier, of the Scottish Royal Observatory, that collisions with comets may account for many of the Biblical and mythological catastrophes of the

Earth's history and pre-history. Apart from that, the only parts of this book that might have seemed surprising to an astronomer in 1961 are some of the discoveries from the unmanned missions to the planets of our Solar System. Black holes, though mentioned on the jacket of the book, are not to be found in the index; quasars receive short shrift; the fascinating puzzle of solar neutrinos is covered in a six-line paragraph.

I am disappointed by Patrick Moore's *History of Astronomy*. It is not so much because the book is poor, but because it has been done before so many times, not least by Patrick Moore himself. "History", here, scarcely develops beyond the ideas of the 1961 version, although this version is better illustrated, bigger and more detailed. Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* has recently managed to adapt the same sort of historical approach to a style which also conveys a flavour of the excitement of current research. Moore's version of the story gives the impression that astronomy is a dead subject. It is the sort of book you read because you are told to learn about astronomy, not because it is exciting in itself.

The New Solar System is altogether more exciting and interesting. It reports on the discoveries of the space age, from the Sun out to Saturn, and the new edition is welcome because the original, published in May 1981, appeared before Voyager 2 reached that ringed planet. But it, too, is history. Today, with the American space program severely curtailed, no new discoveries are likely to overtake this edition for some time.

The weather of Venus and Mars; the volcanoes of Io; Jupiter's Great Red Spot; Saturn's rings. All those and many more features of the Solar

System are described and pictured. Twenty chapters written by as many authors makes the text slightly uneven, but always authoritative, and although parts of the book might go over the heads of many pupils even in secondary schools, the book as a whole could make an invaluable teaching aid for a few lessons on the nature of our Solar System.

But for your own coffee table, the one to choose is definitely *The New Astronomy*. Picture editor Michael Marten has gathered a stunning collection of photographs of astronomical objects, most of them in colour, computer processed and enhanced to give optical images of what an X ray, or infrared or radio telescope "sees". The accompanying text, by Nigel Henbest, explains concisely how astronomers obtain these pictures, and interprets them in terms of the new astronomy - black holes get seven indexed references here, quasars appear on 14 pages. Many professional astronomers might be surprised at the wealth of information revealed by the new techniques described; at the other extreme, you don't have to know any science to appreciate the book. I showed my copy to a friend who is an artist by profession. To him, the beautiful plates are abstract patterns of colour, which have already stimulated him into new experiments at his ansel.

The New Astronomy is first a beautiful book; secondly one which might be informative if your eyes ever stray from the pictures to the text. Above all, it emphasizes what is left out of the Patrick Moore type of astronomy. History is all very well, for historians. The living reality of current developments is what I find exciting in astronomy - and, come to that, in biology, music and art.

John Gribbin

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CSE reflected

Physics Questions for Assessment at 16+. By Stephen Foster. Cambridge University Press £1.25. 0 521 28308 9.

This booklet provides no instant formula for enlightenment, but is excellent material for all physics students who take their revision seriously. The author has chosen a sensible selection of CSE questions from several examination boards and separated them into major topics. The questions are a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer, ranging over the whole syllabus. Answers to numerical parts are given at the end.

It is suggested the questions should be used in revision tests, both for CSE and O level classes, or for assessment purposes. There are a few errors in the booklet, though one diagram gives a

very misleading view of how a plane mirror reflects the letters CSEI. Another diagram labels interference fringes inconsistently. Generally the drawings are clear, though occasionally difficult to connect quickly with the appropriate question.

All teachers of physics to 16+ should have access to a copy of this booklet and some will certainly decide that class sets will be fully justified.

Physics for Today and Tomorrow 2nd edition. By Tom Duncan. John Murray £4.25. 0 7195 4002 X.

This O level and CSE textbook first appeared six years ago and since then has achieved a popularity both with teachers and pupils, being well written, attractively presented, yet concise. The diagrams and illustrations are

clear and well-chosen.

Now we have a new edition which adds short sections on crystals, mechanical properties of materials, beams and structures, and Bernoulli's principle. In addition 96 revision questions and answers taken from recent O level papers have been added at the end of the book. Class sets of books could, if necessary, be augmented with the new edition since the page numbers in both editions correspond. There are some helpful additions to the index, which were omitted from the first edition, and there has also been some updating of other information.

Curiously, the back cover mentions a new section on fluid flow and light, yet if you check fluid flow in the index and turn to page 110 there is nothing new, nor is there an entry in the index for light!

M. D. Joyce

F. W. Kellaway

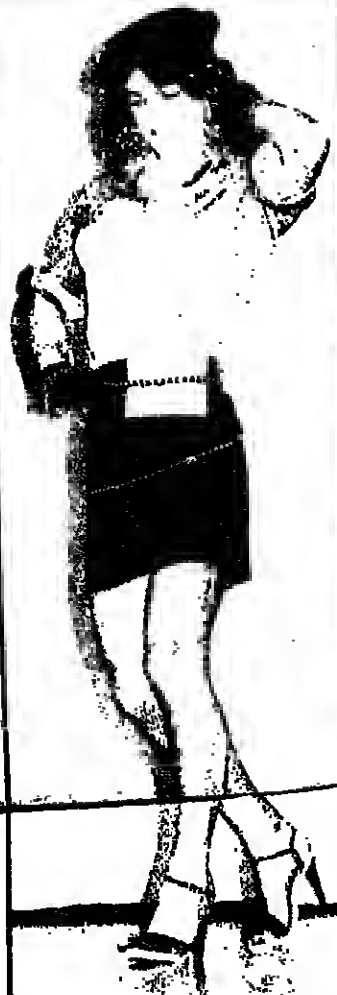
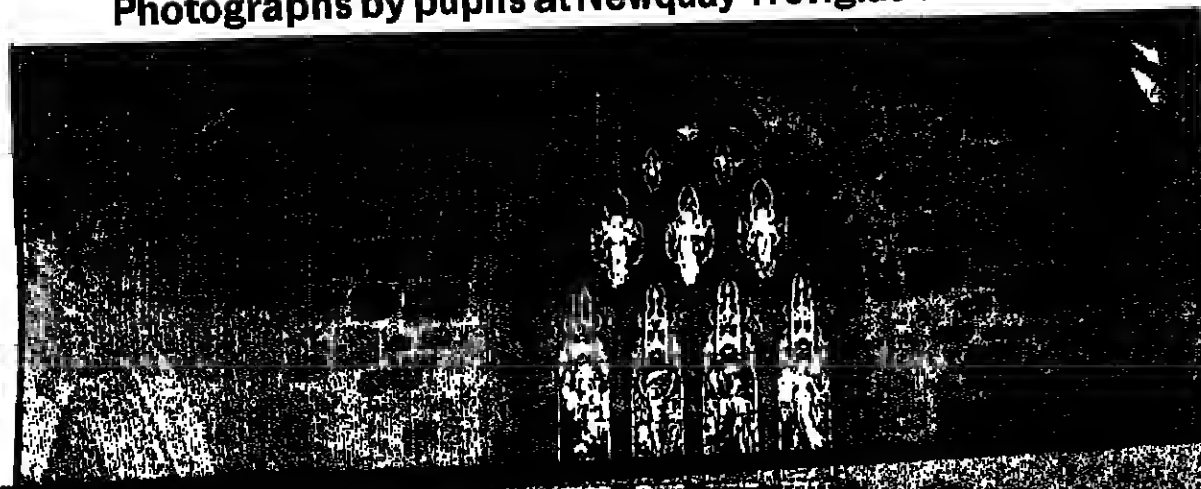
RESOURCES



CHRISTMAS

charity appeal week

Photographs by pupils at Newquay Treviglas School



Newquay Treviglas School is an 11-18 comprehensive serving a large, mainly rural area. It has about 650 pupils, including a sixth form of 80. Before Christmas, the sixth form organized a Christmas Charity Appeal Week, an annual event during which a large variety of fund-raising activities took place.

A major activity was the Christmas Carol Sing, in which pupils contributed songs for the opportunity to receive their school uniforms to wear 'clothes of their own choice'. Other events included a sponsored silence, an egg push, a sponsored dip in the sea, and fancy dress parades. More traditional events included carol concerts and plays.

These events have raised about £1,000 each year for charity. This year the proceeds will go towards the Cornwall Body Scanner Appeal.



Photography was introduced into the school curriculum in 1977 as an option choice for fourth year pupils. Since then it has flourished, with CSE, O and A level courses being offered, as well as an activity within the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The subject is a mixed ability option under the auspices of the art

department with an emphasis on the creative aspects of the medium rather than scientific record making. At present there are 65 fourth, fifth and sixth form pupils taking the subject, with the majority working towards the mode 3 CSE examination offered by the school. This examination concentrates on the practical

side of photography with 60 per cent of the marks derived from practical coursework. The remaining 40 per cent of marks come from a practical examination in which they are given a month to produce a series of photographs in response to one starting point chosen from an examination paper.

The school is equipped with two dark rooms and 20 reflex and non-reflex cameras as well as a range of supplementary equipment, including studio lights and various flash guns. Pupils are encouraged to pursue the subject in an individual way, exploring as many aspects of the subject as possible. This has led to many pupils setting up their own darkrooms at home and buying their own photographic equipment.

The pupils also supply publicity photographs covering various school activities including sports days, presentations and school plays. These photographs will form part of a major photographic exhibition to be held in the County Museum, Truro, June 8 to 29. The exhibition will consist solely of photographs taken by pupils of the school over the past three years.



RESOURCES



MEDIA

Video times

Beebota (BBCV 9004), £22.35
Blue Peter Makes... (BBCV 9007), £22.35
Grange Hill (BBCV 9012) £37.30
All formats available from BBC Publications, 35 Marylebone High St, London W1.

With a wealth of material "in the can" and waiting, the BBC are potentially the biggest video publishers of them all. Already their video catalogue reads like the *Radio Times*, with both a selection of feature films (those currently available would make a slightly better-than-average week on TV) and specially-produced versions of programmes like *Mr Smith's Indoor Garden* and *Play Golf with Peter Alliss*.

It is only with this autumn's crop of new releases that BBC Video have started selling much in the way of highlights from popular light entertainment and drama series. *The Best of the Two Ronnies* and selected episodes from such series as *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin*, *Target*, *Butterflies* and *The Good Life* will be popular -

but surely as tapes to hire from the video club rather than as permanent buys.

Children are well served by both the main catalogue and the new releases. In addition to compilations from such general interest programmes as *Dr Who* and *Top of the Pops*, there are

children's series. *BBC Children's Favourites* features episodes of *Ivor the Engine*, *Bagpuss* and *Clangers*. Its sequel, the more memorably named *Beebota*, provides more of the same plus 15 minutes of the redoubtable *Noggin the Nog*. On both (and all four series come from Oliver Postgate's Smallfilms studio) the real stars are the *Clangers*. Appearing from their saucer-lidded burrows, swanee-whistling sweet nothings to each other, they were the most inventive, delightful incumbents of that 5.35pm pre-News slot since *The Magic Roundabout*.

Janet Ellis, the new presenter on *Blue Peter* joined the programme just in time to get her picture into the latest *Blue Peter Book*. She was, however, a too late for *Blue Peter Makes*... a compilation of the how-to-do-it items from the programme introduced by her predecessor Sarah Greene together with Simon Groom and Peter Duncan.

Artfully, forestalling any criticism of

role-stereotyping, it is Peter who tackles the cooking. But Orange Surprise and Chef Duncan's Baked Bean and Dumpling Soup are not all he is good for; it is also Peter Duncan who demonstrates the construction of the famous *Blue Peter* sledge, explaining all the technicalities of erasable and non-erasable ink.

Followers of the current series *Tucker's Luck* will know Tucker Jenkins as a teenage denizen of the dole queue. The videogram of *Grange Hill*, one more of this autumn's releases, recalls something of his progress there. Episodes from the first series of programmes have been edited to make a seamless 106-minute film which follows the fortunes of Tucker, Benny, Judy and the rest in the first days at a teenage denizen of the dole queue. The videogram of *Grange Hill*, one more of this autumn's releases, recalls something of his progress there. Episodes from the first series of programmes have been edited to make a seamless 106-minute film which follows the fortunes of Tucker, Benny, Judy and the rest in the first days at a teenage denizen of the dole queue.

Hugh David

Brain child

Is Your Brain Really Necessary?
A 50-minute colour film by Yorkshire Television
Format: VHS or Betamax
Price: £40 plus VAT (for use within a school or college)
Available from International Television Enterprises Ltd, 27 Upper Brook St, London W1Y 1PD (tel 01-401 1441) or for hire on 16mm film from Concord Film Institute, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Yorkshire Television have made available on video their fascinating and exasperating treatment of a Sheffield doctor's remarkable discovery: that several young people, apparently recovered from childhood hydrocephalus, are functioning with only a small fraction of the usual human brain. Not only functioning, in fact, but passing GCSEs and going to university.

This central datum has both piquancy and serious implications - with which the programme never fully comes to grips. Incredibly enough, it suffers from vast quantities of padding. The three young folk were taken to Denmark for tests with a new brain-scanning device, which becomes the occasion for endless shots of them waiting for and boarding trains; sitting in airport lounges; sitting on aeroplanes; arriving in Copenhagen... all accompanied by the interviewer asking the doctor over and over again if this is really terribly important, and doctor replying over and over again that yes it is really terribly important.

After the third-rate travelogue, we are subjected to some clumsy third-rate suspense as everyone waits for the brain-scan images to emerge: will they, won't they, prove to be really terribly important? The answer somehow never properly emerges; just as the disconcerting doctor's theory is never coherently stated, and seems to consist mainly of metaphysical speculation about the nature of thought.

Something very extraordinary is certainly going on; one glance at the gaping cavities inside these three heads is enough to establish that much. Yet the programme itself contains an equally gaping absence: not a single

brain specialist's opinion is canvassed. (The discoverer himself is a paediatrician.) As so often with the medium, we smell a rat: is vital information being withheld for the sake of "good television"?

And we don't even get the good television. Or rather, only in part - and those parts tangential to the main subject of the film. In a messy piece of surgery, a whole opening segment has been cut out of the film, leaving the effects and treatment of hydrocephalus itself. It would be indecent to label as padding these intensely moving interviews with the inventor of a crucial valve for draining the skull, whose own child died too soon ("though he died, I have thousands of babies that are mine all over the world"); and with the mother who waits while her little daughter undergoes a kill-or-cure operation.

The interviews with the three youngsters and their parents are also attractive and involving. The aim would fascinate most sixth forms; how much it would inform them is another question. Perhaps its primary educational use is as raw material for the critical analysis of TV as a medium.

Nick Thomas

Colour bar

David Self on "The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer"
The English Programme
Thames Television for ITV
January 30 at 10.31 am
Repeated February 1 at 10.21 am

One of the last plays to be written by the prolific C P Taylor before his untimely death in 1981 was *The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer*. It explores the life and fantasies of Carol, a teenager who has been brought up by white parents as their own child. In fact Carol is the offspring of her mother's pre-marital relationship with another (black) man.

Taunted by a group of skinheads about her skin colour, Carol desperately tries to convince herself and her friend Elaine that she is just "suntanned". In her often violent fantasies, she similarly tries to escape the realities that surround her. Like many of C P Taylor's plays, it was written specifically for young audiences and shows his undoubted understanding of the preoccupations of young people, the conflicts that engulf their minds and the emotional currents running in their social groups.

On the page, the script of *The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer* reads well. It is jokey and ultimately optimistic in the way that Carol comes to terms with her colour and her parents. Adapted for *The English Programme* television series by John Godber, it is necessarily compressed, but has been confidently directed by Edward Joffe in a style that owes little

to the *Handmade* style of the *English Programme* (but in no way feeble) Carol - yet here lies one of the main problems of the production. Blantly, it is inconceivable that Carol, as she appears in this production, could have reached her mid-teens without questioning her identity within her family. Add to this the filmic realism of the scene in which she roughs up a couple of skinheads ("I just went wild") and takes one to hospital, and it all becomes somewhat unconvincing to say the least.

Even so, it is an intriguing and beguiling play. The "and now discuss" triggers are unobtrusively built into the production and it is another example of *The English Programme's* readiness to experiment with surrealist drama.

Other plays in the unit of programmes to be seen in the first half of term are *Derek* by Edward Bond and *Audition* by Alan Cullen. *Derek* (January 16 and 18) is about a sharp-witted Cockney teenager who is persuaded to swap brains with a dumb member of the upper classes. *Audition* (January 23 and 25) is about 15-year-old Rachel, keen to get a part in her school's production of *The Crucible* and confused by her own and her parents' sexuality. The unit concludes with a repeat of Willy Russell's much admired play about a compulsive daydreamer, *The Boy with the Transistor Radio* (February 13 and 15; also 20 and 22).

David Self



Mum (Sue Nicholls), Carol (Janet Steele) and Dad (Tim Healy)

Serving science

David Tawney on the coming of age of CLEAPSE

CLEAPSE (the Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Equipment) was formed in 1963 and its science equipment information service, the Development Group, set up in temporary accommodation in Vauxhall in 1964, which means that it can now celebrate its birthday.

In the early 1960s, a group of science teachers became concerned that the Ministry of Education which, although it had to act as godmother, suggested that it would be the best distributor of much paper, the consortium was set up, with the then London County Council playing a leading part.

The consortium was intended to provide two services: the bulk purchase of equipment for economy of scale and the development of apparatus to match the needs of the new curricula. In the event, the services provided were not exactly as anticipated.

Although a few large L.E.A.s have central purchasing for some items of science equipment, most all schools to buy the items they want from a range of suppliers. Since this freedom of choice is valued by teachers, Cleapase has never set up a bulk purchase scheme.

What the supplies officer was able to achieve were discount terms for its members which were more favourable than most could obtain for themselves. This arrangement continues, but has been restricted by suppliers to the original Cleapase area of the midlands.

Which type reports were only part of the service. Teachers needed to be with the new apparatus which was not always easy to use. Its arrival stimulated a new look at some of the old apparatus, and there was a renewed

interest in d.i.y. A bulletin was regularly distributed and advisory panels of teachers and L.E.A. advisers were set up.

In 1967 the Development Group moved to its permanent home, a suite of laboratories, a workshop and rooms at Brunel University, Uxbridge. The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 imposed new responsibilities on L.E.A.s. The best known element of the Development Group's response was *Hazards*, a set of index cards each devoted to a chemical process or topic in school chemistry and biology. The emphasis was on safer alternatives, rather than on prohibition.

Other guides were concerned with chemical storage, handling mercury fume cupboards, the efficiency of school fume cupboards, the other to measure mercury vapour levels in school science rooms. Both have been well used by members and comprehensive data have been accumulated.

In the late seventies we began to develop a project well under way with each subject's project team developing its own apparatus. The Cleapase Development Group, therefore, had to change direction slightly. Some new apparatus was developed, but mainly they concentrated on helping schools choose from the flood of new items appearing on the market.

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The last major change in the late seventies was the opening of eligibility for membership to all L.E.A.s in England and Wales. The DES had hoped that organizations like Cleapase would

be established in Wales and the north of England. Consequently they had enforced a geographical restriction on membership. Since other groups were not being developed, an invitation to join Cleapase was sent to all L.E.A.s. Membership rose from 43 in 1978 to 60 today.

"This year the group has been replaced by 'The Cleapase School Science Service' with four science graduates, all ex-teachers, two technicians and three office staff. Salaries and expenses are paid by member L.E.A.s through annual subscriptions. Staff are employed by the ILEA on behalf of the consortium. A governing committee of all members meets annually and has two sub-committees.

In the last four years a newsletter, *The Science Equipment News*, has been issued to primary and middle schools together with guides written at this level. The response has been very encouraging. Taking both levels, 15 or so new and revised guides, varying in length, are made available each year and over 20,000 copies issued, most sent on request to individual schools.

School Science Service staff visit L.E.A.s to give talks, contribute to courses or act as consultants. They also set up workshops for school technicians lasting a day and held in an L.E.A. centre, college or school. Topics covered are microscope maintenance, elementary electrical work and handling chemicals and most of the time is spent on practical work.

Shortage of technicians and of funds for repair and replacement of apparatus is increasing the pressure on school science staff and hampering science teaching in many schools.

Our information should be of use to the science curriculum. The considerable demand for our guides encourages us to think that this approach is right. The growth in our membership has produced economies of scale but even so we have to budget very carefully, trying to keep L.E.A. costs for our services as low as possible. Science advisers, science teachers and laboratory technicians are having to struggle to provide good science education for our young people and it is our job to serve them.

David Tawney is the director of the Cleapase School Science Service but the views expressed are not necessarily those of the service.



Sussex sounds

A Century of Change
Read by Robert Hardy
Lloyd George to Beveridge
Read by Trevor Macdonald
Sussex Tapes, Tinsworth Poulshot,
Devizes, Wilt.
Each £5.98 (cassette), £6.50 (reel)

Sussex Tapes have moved down the age range and produced their first material for C level and CSE. These are two eight-hour tapes making up a series entitled "A Social and Economic History of Britain 1700-1950", a subject which covers some of the most popular 16+ syllabuses.

Instead of the now-traditional Sussex Tapes meeting of academic minds in unscripted discussion, the script is read by a well-known voice, interspersed with readings from contemporary sources and the odd industrial song. A few rather basic sound effects - angry rioting noises for people pulling down the first turnpikes in disgust at the tolls, horses' hooves - make it more difficult to hear what's being said, but certainly add to the atmosphere. This move on tape towards something more like the typical radio programme than the typical

exam-gear tape is a welcome one, not only for its presentation, but for the research and assembly of relevant sources, for which teachers have less and less time. With each tape comes a factsheet that can be copied for distribution to pupils, containing a synopsis of what's on the tape, a few notes or hints (watch out for the spelling of Seaborn Rowntree), a bibliography and some questions for further study.

A Century of Change is about population growth, agriculture and transport. Population is a difficult topic of this level because there are even fewer right answers than in the case of history. Robert Hardy reads the tape with a series of favourable, outsider and in-sider positions as causes of the tremendous surge in the 18th-century population, but the script doesn't make it sufficiently clear which were which. Otherwise the tape is ideal, including all the standard information on Cuke and Townshend, Brindley and Telford, and, in addition, some illuminating, eyewitness accounts. Onlookers gasp and cannon roar from the river bank at the opening of Telford's 19-span aqueduct over the River Dee; Cobbett waxed lyrical at the awe-inspiring sight

of a coach-and-eight setting out, while a German onlooker marvels at the ease and apparent comfort in which people travel on top of the stagecoach without a seat or even a rail. Everything on road and canal was geared to equine size, strength and capacity; before the age of the train this was the age of the horse.

Lloyd George to Beveridge describes the 20th-century discovery that for all its reforms and prosperity the Victorian age had still left a legacy of poverty. It covers the Liberal reaction, the effects of two wars, the economic problems between them, and the real beginnings of the welfare state. A section on inter-war unemployment and poverty implicitly condemns governments' assumptions that the level of social services must fall in line with an ailing economy. Governments certainly haven't changed.

This is a more sombre subject than the 18th century when the Industrial Revolution was still in the making, and the tape is correspondingly less vivid. But both will serve a useful purpose either for introducing the topics for the first time or, at the other end of the process, for revision.

Jessica Savage

Cell structure

Mitosis/Melosis Print Set
Reference M80001/2. Price £9.75.
Available from Philip Harris Biological Ltd, Oldkirk, Westonsuper-Mare, Avon BS24 9BJ.

The pack consists of a set of A4 sheets on thin glossy card. Two sheets contain 12 photographs of different stages of mitosis and a further two sheets another 12 pictures of mitosis. Ten sets of each sheet are supplied in the pack together with a set of teaching notes.

The material for the photographs was prepared using a standard technique, which used laser-plotted orcin on the chromosome stain. Cells in the anaphase stage of mitosis were used for the mitotic stages and cells from onion root tip for the mitotic ones.

The notes make very clear the need to emphasize the differences in timing between the process of cell-division and interphases between successive mitotic divisions - a useful analogy used here is that of hurdling on the athletics track. The photographs of the stages of mitosis are wedge-shaped and are intended to be cut out and

arranged to form a clock face indicating the continuity of the process. In contrast mitosis only occurs once during a generation cycle and therefore a linear arrangement is more appropriate. For both types of cell division diagrams provide an indication of the timing of the different stages.

The rest of the notes provide a concise description of the stages of division directly related to the photographs. It is suggested that the pictures be cut out and stuck on to a sheet of card and appropriately labelled to produce a chart of the process. They do, however, neglect to mention the value of presenting a class with sets of the material into the correct order of events: a technique that was introduced with Nuffield Biology in the mid sixties but is still appropriate today.

The photographs themselves are good examples of the material that students might, if lucky, find in their own preparations. Thus they perform another important function as a direct help to practical work in enabling identification of stages to be made.

John A. Barker

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PERSONAL



Ted Wragg

idea, and surely some British manufacturing genius can pick up a government grant to build a plastic udder factory and fill this gap in the market.

The annual golden bra award for the two biggest losers of 1983 is won this year by the MSC. First they tried to stop political education and raised the ugly spectre of censorship and repression. Second when the Exeter College ran into financial difficulties because

there had been fewer Youth Training Scheme trainees than they had been led to believe, David Young had the cheek to accuse them of being inflexible. It was, in fact, their very flexibility and willingness to move wholeheartedly into supporting YTS work that brought about their financial problems when a large number of the trainees the MSC had predicted failed to materialize.

The Daffest Local Authority Scheme prize goes to Croydon for its plan to use blanket testing to root out bad schools and bad teachers. Teachers of remedial classes must already be putting in their bid for A stream groups next year. It is well known that some schools have a better endowed catchment area than others, and that some teachers teach classes of higher ability than others. None of the statistical techniques, such as multiple regression analysis or analysis of covariance, used to "correct" or compensate for these initial and naturally occurring differences, is satisfactory. The Croydon scheme, if implemented, will only create ill-will, produce a narrow "teaching for the test" kind of curriculum, and return the borough to the nineteenth century and payment by results.

The hope for 1984, if hope is needed, is that most of our 400,000 teachers will continue to do their job well, despite a minority of incompetent teachers who get the rest a bad name and provide ammunition for those hostile to education. Their achievements will largely pass unused, though personally appreciated by those who benefit from a good education.

Some politicians and certain sectors of the press will continue to attack maintained schools at every opportunity and often for little good reason. I have never understood why nurses have such a good press and teachers such a bad one. These are two caring professions, and there are probably proportionately no more bad teachers or bad schools than there are ineffective nurses or poor hospitals.

Can you imagine newspaper headlines demanding the sacking of incompetent nurses or doctors? Or some medical equivalent of Croydon i.e. proposing that geriatric wards should be closed down because they have more chronically sick people in them? There is only one course of action I can recommend to you if anyone should attack your school unfairly in 1984. Hit them with your bedpan.

DIARY

Tales of a beaten Minister and the Old Bat

doctors is that they've been members of the TUC since the turn of the century - my address was just before Len Murray left the NGA in the lurch.

I add point to the story by telling them that during the general strike in County Durham, my Old Bat mum was the only professional allowed through the miners' picket lines. I get the feeling that my audience, some of whom are fairly genteel young ladies, who might otherwise have eschewed a polytechnic and done classics at Strawberry Hill, are genuinely impressed that some professions, at any rate, have always been on the side of the workers.



William van Straubenzee

Back to Queen's. After my classical and we discuss my own-found interest in biotechnology. The subject used to be called "genetic manipulation", and the change in nomenclature was meant, partly, to signal the disappearance of ethical worries and the emergence of a new industrial process which could change all our lives for the better. I'm sure that could well be.

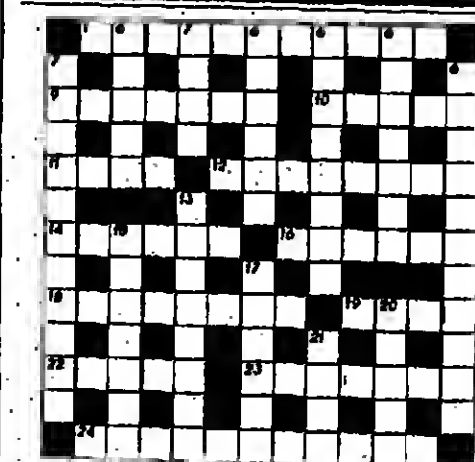
But I am warned over the main course that although researchers are quite properly peot about with all sorts of rules about experimenting with the cells of rats there are no rules which apply to human cells. But then the English, and their royalty, have always been more concerned about animals than people (the RSPCA, but the NSPCC). I suppose that's why Sir Keith and the Government remain so complacent about the continuance of corporal punishment.

A New Year memo to my distinguished successor as chairman of the Select Committee on Education - Sir William van Straubenzee. I've already advised him to complete the inquiry into the education and training of 16 to 19-year-olds. The other inquiry which we didn't quite finish and I hope he will, was on public records.

I admit the subject was somewhat on the fringe of the committee's terms of reference. (But since the committee interprets its own terms of reference, that proved no problem.) We'd heard all our witnesses except one - Lord Blake, my High Tory provost. I got the distinct feeling that he'd love to be sub-poenaed again. There's a draft report in a bottom drawer somewhere, dressed up with Lord Blake's distinguished evidence, it couldn't possibly be accused of bias. I hope the committee finishes that report too.

Christopher Price

No 132 CROSSWORD by Rufus



ACROSS

- 1 Martin hopes to mix, the very thing he hates (11)
9 Relatively patronising (7)
10 In decimal it represents 14 plus (5)
11 Creatures having small feet with a point at each end (4)
12 Chips are heavenly like this (8)
14 Eat out? (6)
15 Extent of one's education (6)
18 Reconciled to having had to give up work (8)

- 19 Experts break the case (4)
22 Hearing test (5)
23 To argue can cause offence (7)
24 Not only fair-weather soldiers, apparently (5, 6)

DOWN

- 2 In short, it's on imposition (5)
3 Footwear raised the stake (4)
4 Bill of fare? (6)
5 Allowed to go into print? (8)
6 Vessel avoided by poor sailors? (7)
7 Fate, took food to excess (11)
8 The favourite in form (8, 3)
13 Odd number (8)
15 He quibbles about suits after the bill goes up (7)
17 Noisy record of a child's progress (6)
20 Referred to as electric power by credit (3)
21 A man to turn to (4)

Christmas Crossword solution page 8

THE TIMES NEWSPAPER LIMITED, 1983. Published by Times Newspapers Limited, P.O. Box 7, 200 City's Inn Road, London WC1N 3LE. Printed by Times Newspapers Limited, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

never get home for Christmas in middle ages, so the festive season is filled with quiet customs, which the don't seem to enjoy. We are served what the menu calls *La hure de saumon* Robert, which a French *dos* tells me means "boar's head". It tastes a bit like British Rail kidneys.

We drink and eat and pray a great deal for the living, the dead, the Church, the Queen and her realm, and for our delinquent selves. (*Deus dei vult gloriam, defendit regnum, ecclesiam, regibus, regnoque nostro pacem et concordiam et nobis peccatoribus vitam eternam.*) It seems a somewhat arrogant request of the almighty. Unlike the Church of England, the college avoids praying for the High Court of Parliament at this time assembled.

Its only concession to Parliament since my day seems to be that, instead of electing a shy, self-effacing lawyer called Mr Jones (who presided over the place in the 1950s) they now have a real, High Tory, historian-peer called



Michael Heseltine... school problems

from Asquith to Douglas-Home. It sounds as if it will sell well in the current political climate and become required A level reading in no time.

Though Lord Blake, concerned, no doubt for my moral welfare, attempts to surround me with clerics (a father in front of me, a canon to my left) he doesn't actually succeed. I fall into conversation with an extremely bright classicist who was at school with Michael Heseltine, and reveals to me the psychological basis of the mid-life crisis from which our Minister of Defence is suffering. Apparently he was severely beaten at school on a number of occasions for walking into town wearing a green trolley.

It is clear that the Government, which is currently agonizing over corporal punishment, (a bit like the NGA - over how to square the law of the land with their principles) should consult Michael over this knotty issue.

Sir Keith must have finished "consulting" on it by now and he can't seriously be thinking of going ahead with his original scheme of concentrating physical assault by teachers in



Lord Blake... High Tory

unfortunate enough to have patients too feeble to object to the barbarity. Michael Heseltine should raise the matter in Cabinet and have the practice banned in its entirety.

I discover to my astonishment that the classics, which I used to teach some decades ago, are by no means as dead in our schools as I had imagined them to be. Half my class seem still to be teaching it. My extremely bright contemporary tells me that he is teaching degrees in the subject at St Mary's, Strawberry Hill, which has graduated from a Catholic seminary to an adjunct of Surrey University.

We agree that the most promising future for the subject in higher education is in joint psychology degrees, helping, with the aid of Greek myths, the likes of Michael Heseltine come to terms with the male menopause. Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer is on the look out for new ideas in continuing education to keep the universities afloat, and we both agree that this is a splendid one.

In the meantime, I am assured that classics at Strawberry Hill remains much in demand, especially from genteel young ladies who don't like the idea of going to a polytechnic. Out of politeness, I refrain from reminding my friend that Surrey University itself developed out of a very much more famous and useful institution called Balfour Polytechnic.

I am particularly aware of this, since my mother, who is moving robustly into her octogenarian years, is an Old Bat. Last some accuse me of filial impiety, I hasten to assure folk that to be called an Old Bat is the highest possible accolade in certain professions, especially that of health visiting. I was presenting health visitors with degrees the other day - this time at South Bank Polytechnic, which has inherited the same health visiting course from which my mother graduated more than 30 years ago. It was even better in those days, since you could be a health visitor without being a nurse first and infested with medical mythology of hospitals.

I tell the health visitors that their chief advantage over both nurses and